

A HANDBOOK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF EXPOSITORY  
SERMONS IN THE BLACK PREACHING TRADITION

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I once heard a sermon entitled “Living in the Red” based on Paul’s statement in Romans 1:14: “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.” Living in the red describes how I feel. There are so many people to whom I owe the debt of gratitude: my parents who have preceded me to Glory, my family who has always believed in me, my teachers who have adorned me with pearls of wisdom, my coaches who have inspired me to aim high, my daughters who constantly amaze me, my best friend Kelly Taylor who continually challenges me, and the members of God’s Church who have patiently borne with me as God works through me. You have placed a crown of confidence not *on* my head but *over* my head and I shall spend my days in His Service trying to grow tall enough to wear it. To God be the glory!

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this Doctor of Ministry project is to teach African-American preachers with little to no formal education how to prepare and deliver expository sermons while maintaining their ethnic and cultural distinctiveness. The final product is a handbook that can be used by African-American preachers desiring to enhance their preaching skills, and by those who want to teach the skills necessary to construct solid expository sermons delivered in the African-American tradition. The first section of this project addresses the need for such a handbook. The second section provides the theological rationale for teaching preaching. The third section is the theoretical rationale for this handbook and a survey of pertinent literature as relates to teaching preaching in this manner. The fourth section is the handbook itself, which provides practical steps of how to construct and deliver the sermon.

The handbook is designed for use as a primary text to teach a class on preparing and delivering expository preaching in the African-American tradition. Pastors may make this class part of a mandatory training program for inexperienced associates preparing for their first sermons. Instructors may use this material as a part of a more comprehensive training program in pastoral leadership.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE FOR BIBLICAL EXPOSITORY BLACK PREACHING

#### **The Importance of Preaching**

Someone quipped that, “preaching is the art of talking in someone else’s sleep.” The attitude of being asleep while listening to a sermon may be making a statement about the unimportance of preaching. According to Haddon Robinson, ‘Not everyone agrees that expository preaching—or any sort of preaching, for that matter—is an urgent need of the church.’<sup>1</sup> The attitude of some is, in a world confronted with such a myriad of problems, what good are mere words?

Is preaching important? Preachers seem to think so. Phillips Brooks in his lectures on preaching at Yale stated, “Let us rejoice with one another that in a world where there are a great many good and happy things for men to do, God has given us the best and happiest, and made us preachers of His Truth.”<sup>2</sup> Brooks considered preaching the apex of happiness. Thirty years later, P. T. Forsyth shared his belief that the state of the pulpit affects the state of the church. “It is, perhaps, an overbold beginning, but I will venture to say that with its preaching Christianity stands and falls.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 17.

<sup>2</sup> Phillips Brooks, *The Joy of Preaching* (Grand Rapids MI: Kregel, 1989), 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Taylor Forsyth, *Positive Preaching and Modern Mind*, The Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), 3.

After 42 years of ministry D. Martyn Lloyd Jones said, “To me the work of preaching is the highest and the greatest and most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called.”<sup>4</sup> Lloyd Jones is clear that there is no higher honor than to be called to preach the gospel.

Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix sound like Old Testament prophets when they say, “Like the powerless Israelites without the ark, the church without strong preaching will have to welcome the new millennium defenseless and weak.”<sup>5</sup> These men believe that preaching is crucial for the church to face the future boldly.

Prolific author and conference speaker, Warren Wiersbe says succinctly, “Preaching God’s Word is the most important thing a minister does.”<sup>6</sup>

In addition to preachers’ opinion that preaching is important, the Bible indicates God holds a high opinion of preaching. When barren Hannah begged God for a son, God blessed her with Samuel, a preacher, who was so accurate that every prophetic word he spoke proved reliable.<sup>7</sup> When King David sinned grievously, covered it up, and nursed a guilty conscience, God sent a preacher with a piercing sermon that drove David to his knees in repentance.<sup>8</sup> It was to a preacher-prophet that God gave the keys of dew and

<sup>4</sup> David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1972), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 17.

<sup>6</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Dynamics of Preaching*, Ministry Dynamics for a New Century, ed. W. Wiersbe Warren (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Books, 1999), 14.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Samuel 1:3:19.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Samuel 12:1-15; Psalm 51.

rain, so that at the preacher's words, heaven was shut or opened.<sup>9</sup> Ezra used preaching to establish the returning exiles in Jerusalem.<sup>10</sup> To teach the cynical that the whole duty of man is to, "fear God and keep his commandments," God used a preacher.<sup>11</sup> And, when God wanted to save Nineveh, he sent Jonah to preach a sermon.<sup>12</sup>

Both the Old and New Testaments support the fact that God finds preaching important. God had only one son, and that son was anointed to preach.<sup>13</sup> Jesus preached and he sent the 12 disciples out and commanded them to preach the Kingdom.<sup>14</sup> Preachers started the New Testament Church.

The birth of the New Testament Church happened on the Day of Pentecost and after Peter preached, "there were added about three thousand souls."<sup>15</sup> Peter was not the only one who believed in the power of preaching. The Apostle Paul was emboldened to preach the gospel precisely because "it is the power of God unto salvation."<sup>16</sup> Paul passed his belief in the importance of preaching on to his sons in ministry.

In what was perhaps his last letter while on death row, the Apostle Paul commanded Timothy to pay attention to his preaching. "Be diligent to present yourself

<sup>9</sup> 1 Kings 17:1.

<sup>10</sup> Nehemiah 8:1-8.

<sup>11</sup> Ecclesiastes. 1:1; 12:13.

<sup>12</sup> Jonah 1:2.

<sup>13</sup> Luke 4: 16-19.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 10:5-7.

<sup>15</sup> Acts 2:41.

<sup>16</sup> Romans 1:16.

approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”<sup>17</sup> Paul knew that the last days would be perilous times and nothing short of an ardent commitment to solid preaching would allow people of God to be effective in ministry.

What happens when preaching takes place? When the Word of God is preached, direction is given. “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”<sup>18</sup> The Word lights the feet of believers and shows them where they are, and the light on their paths shows them where they are going.

Through faithful preaching of the Word of God, seed is sown. “Behold a sower went out to sow.”<sup>19</sup> In the parable of the soils, Jesus likens the Word preached to a seed sown in a variety of soils and when effective, results in fruitfulness.

When preachers preach, the people of God are fed. “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”<sup>20</sup> According to Jesus, believers receive spiritual nourishment when the Word is preached to them and they receive it into their lives.

Effective preaching by the apostles turned the world upside down and brought listeners to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Preaching helped the Church Fathers establish solid doctrine and theology, and they transformed society morally and ethically.

<sup>17</sup> 2 Timothy 2:15.

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 119:105.

<sup>19</sup> Matthew 13:3.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 4:3.

Preaching confronts men and women with their sins, and brings them to repentance and salvation. Preaching is vital.

### **A Case for Expository Preaching**

The Bible makes it clear that preaching is important to God and it ought to be important to preachers as well. But, what is the best way to preach God's Word effectively? The goal of this section is twofold: to provide a description of expository preaching, and to make a case for expository preaching as an effective way to preach God's Word.

What is expository preaching? The answer to the question varies, and a consensus on what constitutes expository preaching is lacking. Robinson says, "Regrettably the Bureau of Weights and Measures does not have a standard expository sermon encased in glass against which to compare other messages. Ministers may paste the label expository on whatever sermon they please, and no consumer advocate will correct them."<sup>21</sup>

In defining expository preaching, Sidney Greidanus places his emphasis on the process used by the exegete to develop the message and on contemporary application to the listener:

Expository preaching is Bible-centered preaching. That is, it is handling the text in such a way that its real and essential meaning as it existed in the mind of the particular Biblical writer and as it exists in the light of the over-all context of Scripture is made plain and applied to the present-day needs of the hearers.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 21.

<sup>22</sup> Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 11.

Master's Seminary professor, Richard Mayhue describes expository preaching by leaning heavily on the aspect of explanation. "An expositor . . . explains the Scripture by laying open the text to public view in order to set forth its meaning, explain what is difficult to understand, and make appropriate application."<sup>23</sup>

Powerful evangelist and teacher of preachers, Stephen Olford, includes the work of the Holy Spirit in his definition of preaching by saying, "Expository preaching is the Spirit-empowered explanation and proclamation of the text of God's Word with due regard to the historical, contextual, grammatical, and doctrinal significance of the given passage, with the specific object of invoking a Christ-transforming response."<sup>24</sup>

Olford was passionate about preaching and in his book *Anointed Expository Preaching* reflects that passion. Olford shares a method of preaching and challenges preachers to be holy vessels in the hand of God.

After making a case for preaching, Haddon Robinson goes on to describe what it means to practice "big idea" expository preaching. "Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first

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<sup>23</sup> Richard L. Mayhue, "Rediscovering Expository Preaching," in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, John MacArthur, Jr. and the Master's Seminary faculty (Dallas: Word, 1992), 11.

<sup>24</sup> Stephen F. Olford and David L. Olford, *Anointed Expository Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1998), 69.

applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher, applies to the hearers.”<sup>25</sup>

Robinson’s major thesis in *Biblical Preaching* is preaching involves the communication of a biblical idea or concept. “Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of Scripture.”<sup>26</sup>

Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix, emphasize that true expository preaching seeks a positive response from the audience. They define expository preaching as “the oral communication of biblical truth by the Holy Spirit through human personality to a given audience with the intent of enabling a positive response.”<sup>27</sup>

Bryan Chapell focuses on the end result of preaching by stating that,

An expository sermon may be defined as a message whose structure and thought are derived from a biblical text, that covers the scope of the text, and that explains the features and context of the text in order to disclose the enduring principles for faithful thinking, living, and worship intended by the Holy Spirit, who inspired the text.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the variation in what constitutes expository preaching, John Stott declares, “All true Christian preaching is expository preaching.”<sup>29</sup> Haddon Robinson

<sup>25</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 21.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>27</sup> Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 27.

<sup>28</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 31.

<sup>29</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*, 1st American ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 125.

protects us from parochialism when he makes the observation that, “Expository preaching at its core is more a philosophy than a method. Whether or not we can be called expositors starts with our purpose and with our honest answer to the question: ‘Do you, as a preacher, endeavor to bend your thoughts to the Scriptures, or do you use the Scriptures to support your thought.’”<sup>30</sup>

Expository preaching is effective because it takes Scripture seriously. Haddon Robinson warns, “The constant temptation of the preacher is to cry out some other message than the Scriptures—a political system, a theory of economics, a new religious philosophy.”<sup>31</sup> The expository preacher resists this temptation and focuses on preaching the Scripture. Paul’s advice to young Timothy was, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”<sup>32</sup> In contrast to his opponents, Timothy is to show his genuineness by taking “pains to present himself before God as one who has been tested and found to be genuine.”<sup>33</sup> Expositors take the Word seriously.

Another reason expository preaching is effective is because it allows the power of God’s Word to enter the lives of God’s people. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians and pointed out the dramatic change in their lives by saying, “You turned to God from idols

<sup>30</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 22.

<sup>31</sup> Haddon W. Robinson and Scott M. Gibson, *Making a Difference in Preaching: Haddon Robinson on Biblical Preaching*, ed. Scott M. Gibson (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Books, 1999), 63.

<sup>32</sup> 2 Timothy 2:15.

<sup>33</sup> William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, vol. 46, World Biblical Commentary, ed. Bruce M. Metzger, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 524.

to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.”<sup>34</sup> What caused the transformation in their lives? Their reception of the “Word” served as the catalyst for changed lives.<sup>35</sup> As expositors engage in biblical preaching, God’s power is unleashed because “genuine expository preaching has behind it the power of God.”<sup>36</sup>

Expository preaching is an effective way to preach because it promotes spiritual fitness. When rightly divided, the Word of God is “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”<sup>37</sup> Consistent exposure to the Word of God prepares people to serve God.

The Word of God equips people to do what God calls them to do. “The application of Scripture’s principles to our lives by gifted teachers in the congregation enables us to make progress in the life that is pleasing to God.”<sup>38</sup> Biblical preaching saves people and promotes spiritual growth through child training so that people can please God through their service.

Expository preaching is helpful. Richard Mayhue provides a list of some practical benefits of expository preaching:

<sup>34</sup> 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10.

<sup>35</sup> 1 Thessalonians 1:6.

<sup>36</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 21.

<sup>37</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16.

<sup>38</sup> Philip H. Towner, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series 14, ed. Grant R. Osborne (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 201.

1. Expositional preaching best achieves the biblical intent of preaching; delivering God's message.
2. Expositional preaching promotes scripturally authoritative preaching.
3. Expositional preaching magnifies God's Word.
4. Expositional preaching provides a storehouse of preaching material.
5. Expositional preaching leads to thinking and living biblically.
6. Expositional preaching forces the treatment of hard-to-interpret texts.
7. Expositional preaching allows for handling broad theological themes.
8. Expositional preaching keeps preachers away from ruts and hobby horses.
9. Expositional preaching imitates the preaching of Christ and the apostles.<sup>39</sup>

### **A Case for Teaching Preaching**

The first portion of this chapter demonstrated the importance of preaching, especially expository preaching. The chapter built a case for a philosophy of preaching that seeks to honor God and his Word. The next issue is how preachers learn to preach. A survey of the biblical record shows that the Bible consistently supports older more experienced preachers teaching or training younger less experienced preachers.

How was teaching done in ancient times? Some people could write in ancient times; however, “Most teaching . . . was done by word of mouth. The teacher told his story, gave explanations, and asked questions; the pupil repeated the story, and asked or answered questions.”<sup>40</sup> Most of what was taught was general. Fathers also taught their sons trades believing that without useful trades, their sons would be thieves.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Mayhue, "Rediscovering Expository Preaching," 20.

<sup>40</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, trans. John McHugh (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 49.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

### Teaching in the Pentateuch

In Genesis 18, the Bible says the reason God chose Abraham was so that he (Abraham) would “command his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice.”<sup>42</sup> According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, the word “command” refers to the instruction given by a father to a son, a farmer to his laborers, or a king to his servants.<sup>43</sup> In this passage Abraham, one with more experience with God, is chosen by God to teach and train those in his household, with less experience with God.

Later in the book of Exodus, Moses finds himself in a demanding situation acting as judge among the people of Israel. “It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from morning until the evening.”<sup>44</sup> Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, the older man, counsels Moses, the younger man, about the hazard of attempting to govern a whole nation of people single-handedly. Moses is on the path to exhaustion and ineffectiveness.<sup>45</sup> Jethro advises Moses to “teach” specific people and place them over others as a way of delegating responsibility for the formidable task of governing the nation. The Pentateuch supports the idea that older, more experienced people teach younger, less experienced people.

<sup>42</sup> Genesis 18:19.

<sup>43</sup> R. Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, ed., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 2:757.

<sup>44</sup> Exodus 18:13.

<sup>45</sup> Exodus 18:17-19.

### Teaching in the Historical Books

Samuel was born in answer to his mother's prayer. She made a vow to the Lord that if he would give her a child she would dedicate that child back to the Lord. After Samuel was weaned, Hannah kept her vow and gave Samuel to the Priest Eli to rear at the temple in Shiloh.<sup>46</sup>

Eli the priest raised Samuel. Eli taught and trained Samuel regarding the duties and responsibilities of a priest. Eli started Samuel ministering before the Lord. Under Eli's tutelage, Samuel thrived. "Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and favor both with the Lord and with men."<sup>47</sup> Samuel went on to be one of the greatest prophets in Israel, anointing the first and second kings of Israel. He was so accurate as a prophet that the Bible says, "The Lord was with him and let none of his words fail."<sup>48</sup> Samuel was a great prophet and his success built on lessons taught to him as a young inexperienced child by a more experienced teacher.

### Teaching in the Wisdom Books

Wisdom literature is a genre prominent in didactic information. "Biblical wisdom literature is part of a vast body of written and oral sayings with roots deep in antiquity. This literature is marked by sage observations about life set down in memorable form."<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> 1 Samuel 1.

<sup>47</sup> 1 Samuel 2:27.

<sup>48</sup> 1 Samuel 3:19

<sup>49</sup> William Sanford LaSor and others, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 447.

Wisdom in ancient Israel meant skillful living. “Essentially the book of Proverbs is a collection of comparisons based on reflection that seeks to instruct people in *right behavior.*”<sup>50</sup> The purpose of Proverbs goes beyond providing readers with knowledge; it aims to make readers skillful in living.

Proverbs begins teaching within the context of the home between parent and child: “Hear, my son, your father's instruction And do not forsake your mother's teaching; Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about your neck.”<sup>51</sup> According to the sage, obedient listening by children results in them being ennobled and honored.

Throughout Proverbs, children are admonished to “pay attention to” and “not forget” the instruction that comes from the older more experienced parent (see Proverbs 1:15; 2:1-2; 3:1-2, 11, 21; 4:1, 20; 5:1, 7). The sage warns that those who neglect the instruction of their teachers will end up remorseful, “And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!”<sup>52</sup> The example of Proverbs is clear, young people need the training and discipline that older more experienced family members can bring.

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<sup>50</sup> Andrew E. Hill, and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2000), 356.

<sup>51</sup> Proverbs 1:8-9.

<sup>52</sup> Proverbs 5:11-13.

### Teaching in the Prophets

Prophets are commonly thought of as rugged, loud talking, and eccentric persons calling down judgment upon God's people; however, biblical prophets are more akin to covenant enforcers. "The prophets, too, had a mission to instruct people; this was at least as much a part of their task as foretelling the future."<sup>53</sup> Appearing during spiritually low times, prophets reminded the people of God of their covenant responsibilities, and encouraged repentance and faith in Yahweh.

The prophet Daniel along with his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were deported to Babylon. By order of the King of Babylon, the best and the brightest of the Israelite captives were drafted into an intensive training program. The trainees were supplied with food and wine and were trained for a period of three years.<sup>54</sup>

Although Daniel and the three Hebrew boys did not defile themselves by eating the king's food and drinking the king's wine, they did submit themselves to the teaching they received. At the end of the trial period, it was reported of Daniel and his friends that, "As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm."<sup>55</sup>

Although the Babylonians were of a culture different from the Hebrews, they also practiced teaching. The Scripture does not say specifically who taught these Israelites, but

<sup>53</sup> Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 50.

<sup>54</sup> Daniel 1:4.

<sup>55</sup> Daniel 1:20.

it stands to reason that the instructors were more experienced in Babylonian language and culture than Daniel and his friends.

The style of teaching found in the Old Testament including the Pentateuch, the historical books, wisdom literature, and prophetic literature, reveals a pattern of older, more experienced persons teaching and instructing those younger and less experienced.

### Teaching in the New Testament

What was the nature of education in New Testament times? Most of New Testament history occurred under Greco-Roman culture. The Greek word for education was *paideia*, which meant “to provide instruction, with the intent of forming proper habits of behavior—'to teach, to instruct, to train, teaching, instruction.' training and discipline.”<sup>56</sup> The aim of Greek education was formation of the human person.

Most schools had only one teacher and were private and small. Unless otherwise provided for by endowment, teacher compensation came from student fees. “Both Greco-Roman and Jewish education may be classified according to a three stage system—primary, secondary, and advanced.”<sup>57</sup> This statement describes the formal education system.

Primary education consisted mainly of reading and writing based on learning by memorization. Secondary education was in the classics under a *grammaticus*

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<sup>56</sup> J. P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, ed., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2d ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 2:414.

<sup>57</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 100.

(grammarian) who read aloud, explained, and questioned the students. Advanced education involved attending a kind of finishing school. Students participated in festivals, processions, and became aware of their cultural and political heritage, and gained experience in public life.

Jewish education followed the same stages as the Greco-Roman but the content emphasized the Torah. Advanced study meant attaching oneself to a great Rabbi or attending one of the great academies.<sup>58</sup>

#### Jesus: The Master Teacher/Preacher

Many people of his day recognized Jesus as a teacher. Nicodemus, a leader of the Pharisees, approached Jesus under the cover of darkness and paid Jesus the compliment of calling him a teacher.<sup>59</sup> Religious leaders saw Jesus as a teacher as did others. The young rich ruler, the Apostle John, and the man who demanded Jesus make his brother divide their inheritance all addressed Jesus as “teacher.” Whether rich or common, people saw Jesus as a teacher.<sup>60</sup> In addition to religious leaders and others who referred to Jesus as “teacher,” Jesus referred to himself as a teacher. When teaching the disciples to expect persecution, and when sending his disciples to make preparation for the Passover, Jesus referred to himself as “teacher.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>59</sup> John 3:1-2.

<sup>60</sup> Matthew 19:16; Mark 9:38; Luke 12:13.

<sup>61</sup> Matthew 10:24-25; 26:18.

Those who benefited most from Jesus' teaching were his disciples. According to the Bible, "He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that he might send them forth to preach."<sup>62</sup> The disciples were privy to the public messages of Jesus and on several occasions Jesus took them aside and taught them privately.<sup>63</sup> The disciples learned all aspects of ministry including preaching and teaching from Jesus. Under Jesus the disciples were exposed to interpretation of Scripture, paradox, hyperbole, riddle, contrast, irony, and parables. Jesus was a master teacher who instructed his disciples through a variety of methods in a variety of contexts. The Old Testament pattern of the more experienced teaching the less experienced continues in the New Testament accounts of Jesus as teacher.

### Teaching in the Early Church

The Book of Acts is the second book in the Bible attributed to Luke and is addressed to Theophilus. "The Gospel of Luke records what Jesus "began to do and teach" in his human body, and the Book of Acts tells us what Jesus continued to do and teach through his spiritual body, the church."<sup>64</sup> The Book of Acts records the expansion of the church from Jerusalem to Rome. Was teaching a part of the process? The Book of Acts demonstrates the "Great Commission" at work in the early church.

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<sup>62</sup> Mark 3:14.

<sup>63</sup> Matthew 24:3; Mark 9:28;13:3; Luke 10:23.

<sup>64</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2 vols. (Wheaton IL: Victor Books, 1989), 1:402.

Immediately after Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, “[The people] were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”<sup>65</sup> The early church started out with teaching as a part of its growth strategy.

Peter and John apparently had no formal training; however, they had been with Jesus and learned from his example.<sup>66</sup> The informal training these men received from being followers of Jesus enabled them to teach and preach effectively after Jesus was gone.

Teaching was an important activity in the early church. The apostles spent considerable time engaged in teaching. Paul taught the Word of God for a year and a half in Corinth and he also spent over three years in Ephesus.<sup>67</sup>

A Jew named Apollos was a silver-tongued orator in the early church. Apollos was “mighty in the Scriptures,” and, although Apollos was only acquainted with the baptism of John, “he was speaking and teaching accurately.”<sup>68</sup> God used Apollos greatly because once armed with the full gospel, he was able to refute the Jews and to demonstrate that Jesus was the Messiah (Acts 18:28).

The Apostle Paul’s farewell speech to the Ephesian elders at Miletus offers a graphic picture of Paul’s teaching ministry (Acts 20:17-38). As a faithful minister Paul is

<sup>65</sup> Acts 2:42.

<sup>66</sup> Acts 4:13.

<sup>67</sup> Acts 18:11; 24:7; 20:31.

<sup>68</sup> Acts 18:25.

confident that he discharged his duty among the Ephesians, “I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house.”<sup>69</sup> Paul taught them the whole counsel of God and expected the elders to be able to carry on after he left them. Paul believed in the teaching ministry as a means of strengthening the church. As the Book of Acts closes, the Apostle Paul is in Rome under house arrest, and he says, “Preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.”<sup>70</sup>

### The Pastoral Epistles: Models in Teaching Church Leadership

The Pastoral Epistles are aptly named because they address the care of Christian communities and church order. Since these letters contain pastoral instruction, they serve as solid models of how Paul mentored and what he taught the two young preachers named Timothy and Titus.

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul reminds Timothy of the purpose for which Paul left him in Ephesus: “Remain at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach certain doctrines.”<sup>71</sup> The word translated “instruct” is *parangello*, which connotes

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<sup>69</sup> Acts 20:20.

<sup>70</sup> Acts 28:31.

<sup>71</sup> 1 Timothy 1:3.

the idea of a military command, it demands that a subordinate obey an order from a superior.<sup>72</sup> Paul taught Timothy to teach authoritatively.

First Timothy 3 lists the qualifications for being an overseer in God's house. Verse two says the pastor must be "able to teach." New Testament scholar Philip Towner points out, "This is really the only ministry skill or gift enumerated among the aspects of character that fills out this leadership profile."<sup>73</sup> Paul delineates a long list of character traits required for the overseer but includes teaching as the only skill necessary.

In chapter four, Paul commands Timothy to prescribe and teach, which Timothy is to make his habitual responsibility. Timothy is to order, exhort, and instruct authoritatively while at the same time teaching solid doctrine to those in the church. Two verses later Paul commands Timothy to "give attention" to preaching and teaching.<sup>74</sup> And finally in 1 Timothy 4:16, Paul admonishes Timothy to "pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching;" Paul wanted Timothy to take his teaching responsibility seriously.

In the letter to Titus as in the other Pastoral Epistles, the Apostle Paul, an older more experienced preacher, advises and admonishes Titus, a younger less experienced preacher. Paul informs Titus that God's Word is the sole source of content for all faithful preaching and teaching.<sup>75</sup> As Paul lists the qualifications for leaders in the church, he says that the overseer must be, "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the

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<sup>72</sup> John MacArthur, *1 Timothy*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 15.

<sup>73</sup> Towner, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 73.

<sup>74</sup> 1 Timothy 4:11,13.

<sup>75</sup> Titus 1:2-3.

teaching,”<sup>76</sup> The overseer of the congregation must grasp the reliable Word that he has been taught. This will allow the overseer to encourage and exhort others effectively in healthy doctrine and to refute those who oppose solid doctrine. Both are important responsibilities.

Against the false teachers that have infiltrated Crete, Titus is ordered to, “speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.”<sup>77</sup> The word translated as “sound” *hugiainein*, literally means “health-giving.”<sup>78</sup> The Word taught and preached is a word that gives spiritual health to those who absorb and digest it. Titus is urged to preach and teach this Word authoritatively.

In Paul’s final letter to Timothy, one expects to find the most crucial elements of ministry discussed. It is believed that Paul wrote this letter from Rome while in prison, and his son in the faith, Timothy, was in Ephesus. This is probably one of Paul’s most personal letters. Timothy is encouraged to “be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”<sup>79</sup> Preachers must do their utmost in handling God’s Word. They should be like craftspeople who when finished with their products take pride in their skills. Paul teaches Timothy that this must be his attitude when preaching and teaching.

<sup>76</sup> Titus 1:9.

<sup>77</sup> Titus 2:1.

<sup>78</sup> William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, rev. ed., The Daily Study Bible Series (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1975), 46.

<sup>79</sup> 2 Timothy 2:15.

According to the Paul, Timothy lived in “perilous” times, and Timothy would need to follow the right examples.<sup>80</sup> Paul holds himself up as a model to emulate both in teaching and in living.

Paul also urged Timothy to adhere to the Bible, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;”<sup>81</sup> The Word of God is able to change lives and it must be preached and taught if the church is to survive difficult and dangerous times. Timothy is commanded to “Preach the Word!”<sup>82</sup> Paul anticipated a future in which people would not tolerate sound teaching. Paul taught Timothy what to expect and how to counter it.

#### Summary of Teaching Preaching

Study of both Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures reveals that the practice of older, more experienced people training younger, less experienced people is biblical. The pattern occurred among the patriarchs, during the historical period, within wisdom literature, and among the prophets of the Old Testament. The pattern is also reflected in the New Testament in the Gospels as Jesus trained His disciples, in the epistles, and particularly in the Pastoral Epistles where the aged apostle Paul teaches Timothy and Titus, his younger protégées. Although the subject matter may have been

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<sup>80</sup> 2 Timothy 3:10-12.

<sup>81</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16.

<sup>82</sup> 2 Timothy 4:2.

different in ancient times, the principle is established that it is biblical for the older more experienced to teach and train the younger less experienced.

### The Bible and Culture and Ethnicity

What is meant by the terms culture and ethnicity? Culture has to do with people's unique perspectives; it is how they see things. "Our culture is our world view, that is, fundamental to our understanding of who we are, where we have come from and where we are going. It is everything in us and around us that defines and shapes us."<sup>83</sup> Culture is the colored lens through which people see themselves and their world. Culture operates as both binoculars and blinders, helping people see some things and preventing them from seeing others.<sup>84</sup> Like a fish in water, people may be unaware of their cultural context but it exists and affects their perspective on everything.

*The Oxford English Dictionary* second edition defines "ethnic" as, "Pertaining to race; peculiar to a race or nation; ethnological. Also pertaining to or having common racial, cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics, especially designating a racial or other group within a larger system." One's ethnicity refers to the ethnic group to which one belongs. People of like ethnicity share certain racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious characteristics that engender kinship.

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<sup>83</sup> Tokunboh Adeyemo, ed., *Africa Bible Commentary*, with forewords by John R. Stott and Robert K. Aboagye-Mensah (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2006), 101.

<sup>84</sup> Robert T. Coote and John R. W. Stott, ed., *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture: The Papers of the Lausanne Consultation on Gospel and Culture* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 101.

Every human being has an ethnic and cultural identity. Several texts within Genesis 1-12 have direct implications for a theology of race. “The Bible does not begin with a special race of people, the first man is simply called ‘Adam,’ which means humankind.”<sup>85</sup> Originally all races came from Adam and Eve and were common. From the beginning, the one attribute that all humanity shared was being “made in God’s image”.<sup>86</sup> Later people were scattered into families, languages, lands, and nations.<sup>87</sup>

One salient feature of the Bible is that it freely mentions the cultural or ethnic identities of the people under discussion. In most cases, no judgment is made about the person because of ethnicity or culture. This is true in both the Old and New Testaments. The father of the faithful is identified as, “Abram the Hebrew.”<sup>88</sup> Throughout Genesis, Sarah’s handmaid is called, “Hagar the Egyptian”.<sup>89</sup> One of the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel, Judah, is said to have married “a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua”.<sup>90</sup> The Old Testament does not conceal race and neither should we.

The New Testament candidly shares the culture and ethnicity of people in the Gospel records. As the Gospel of Matthew opens, it introduces the “Magi from the east,”

<sup>85</sup> J. Daniel Hays, *From Every People and Nation: A Biblical Theology of Race*, New Studies in Biblical Theology, ed. D. A. Carson (Downers Grove IL: Inter Varsity Press 2003), 47.

<sup>86</sup> Genesis 1:26-31.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. , 10-11.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. , 14:13.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. , 16:1; 21:9; 25:12.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. , 38:2.

probably Persians, coming to pay homage to the baby Jesus.<sup>91</sup> In the sixth chapter of Matthew, Jesus admonishes his disciples not to babble like the *ethnikos*, which according Louw and Nida refers to a Gentile, heathen, or pagan.<sup>92</sup>

Mark records an incident highlighting the tenacious faith of a “Syrophoenician woman” who implored Jesus to exorcise her demon-possessed daughter.<sup>93</sup> The Gospel of Luke, with its universal appeal, records the words of Jesus at the synagogue in his hometown, expressing the sovereignty of God and pointing out that in the time of Elisha the prophet only “Naaman the Syrian was healed.”<sup>94</sup> Jesus showed his iconoclastic streak when he intentionally (*dei*) traveled through Samaria in order to meet with a “Samaritan woman” at Sychar.<sup>95</sup>

In the Book of Acts, the Gospel spread from Jerusalem to Judea, to Samaria, to the uttermost parts of the world. The Gospel traveled geographically, ethnically, and culturally. On the day of Pentecost, each person heard the gospel “in his own native language”.<sup>96</sup> The list of hearers is extensive "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both

<sup>91</sup> Matthew 2:1-2.

<sup>92</sup> Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1:38.

<sup>93</sup> Mark 7:26.

<sup>94</sup> Luke 4:27.

<sup>95</sup> John 4.

<sup>96</sup> Acts 2:8.

Jews and proselytes; Cretans and Arabs".<sup>97</sup> Since they heard the message preached in their own languages, the hearers did not have to translate from one language to another. God miraculously communicated cross-culturally to all who were there that day.

In the New Testament epistles, culture and ethnicity are evident. The Apostle Paul regularly divides people into two groups, Jews and Gentiles.<sup>98</sup> Paul argues in the book of Galatians that ethnicity and culture are not barriers to receiving the gift of salvation. He says the Gospel is for Gentiles as well as Jews without following religious customs.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, ethnicity and culture exist, however, they are not barriers to salvation because, "the middle wall of partition has been broken down."<sup>99</sup> In the book of Titus, Paul mentions ethnicity and culture as a reason to walk worthy of the Gospel because Cretans were known as, "liars, evil brutes, and lazy gluttons."<sup>100</sup> There existed a racial stereotype about the Cretans.

In the Apocalypse, the Apostle John shares a beatific vision he received on the island of Patmos. He says he saw "a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands".<sup>101</sup> From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible respects ethnicity and culture.

<sup>97</sup> Acts 2:9-11.

<sup>98</sup> Romans 1:14; 10:12; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11

<sup>99</sup> Ephesians 2:14-22.

<sup>100</sup> Titus 1:12.

<sup>101</sup> Revelation 7:9.

The greatest example of God being interested in and showing respect for culture is the incarnation. When the Word became flesh, Jesus invaded a culture. He was a poor, Palestinian Jewish male, living in the first century. Jesus commanded His disciples to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.”<sup>102</sup> Obedience to Jesus’ command requires a strategy that is culturally sensitive.

Culture and ethnicity are important in preaching because they affect how one preaches. It is impossible to preach a gospel devoid of culture and ethnicity. “Nobody can reduce the biblical Gospel to a few culture-free axioms which are universally intelligible. This is because the mind-set of all human beings has been formed by the culture in which they have been brought up.”<sup>103</sup>

Does it reflect a racist attitude to want to reach a specific ethnic group or culture with the gospel? One can share the gospel with all and yet have a special desire to reach certain groups. This attitude is reflected in the life of the Apostle Paul. He had a burning desire to reach the world with the gospel but there was a special place in his heart for the nation of Israel.

After Jesus revealed himself to Paul on the Damascus road, he desired to preach to all, and he declared, “Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.”<sup>104</sup> Paul is called the Apostle to the Gentiles; however, it is clear he had a special place in his heart for the Jews. “For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of

<sup>102</sup> Matthew 28: 18-20.

<sup>103</sup> Coote and Stott, *Down to Earth*, vii.

<sup>104</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:16.

my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”<sup>105</sup> The Apostle wishes that if it were possible, he would be damned if it would cause the Jews to be saved. Paul goes on to say that his “heart’s desire and prayer for Israel is their salvation.”<sup>106</sup> What a deep love he had for the Jews.

#### Summary of the Bible and Culture and Ethnicity

The Bible is candid about culture and ethnicity. Biblical characters often are identified by race or nationality, and cultural mores are described. The gospel, if it is to reach all people, must be contextualized to fit the culture in which it is preached. God respected culture so much that He sent His son as a Jewish male in Palestine. Each culture must assume the ultimate responsibility for contextualizing the Gospel in its own setting.

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<sup>105</sup> Romans 9:3.

<sup>106</sup> Romans 10:1.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL RATIONALE FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITORY PREACHING

If one were going to teach expository preaching to African-Americans who have little to no formal training in homiletics, it would be important to know what key literature is available to assist in the process. This section of the paper will examine noteworthy literature relating to basic exegesis, expository preaching, and African-American or Black preaching because these three areas are the major thrust of the African-American pulpit ministry.

#### Basic Exegesis

“Exegesis is the careful, systematic study of the Scripture to discover the original intended meaning.”<sup>1</sup> In order to be a good expositor, one must first be a good exegete. Being good at structuring sermons while being poor in Bible study is like being good at following a recipe but poor at selecting ingredients. Lloyd Perry says it clearly, “Good preaching is the product of great study.”<sup>2</sup>

Robinson, says, “Clear, relevant biblical exposition does not take place Sunday after Sunday by either intuition or accident. Good expositors have methods for their

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon D. Fee and Douglas K. Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, ed. D. Fee and Douglas Stuart Gordon, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids Mich: Zondervan, 2003), 23.

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd Merle Perry, *Biblical Preaching for Today's World*, Rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1990), 13-69.

study.”<sup>3</sup> Effective method usually starts with observation of the biblical passage. Observation involves seeing what is actually there. Oletta Wald highlights the significance of observation when she says, “The more careful and thorough your observations, the more meaningful will be your interpretations, the fairer will be your evaluations, and the richer will be your applications.”<sup>4</sup> The outcome of Bible study depends directly on how well one observes.

Howard and William Hendricks identify observation skills as one of the reasons why some students of the Word surpass others. They say, “What makes one person a better Bible student than another? He can see more, that’s all.”<sup>5</sup> The best Bible students are those who do more than look at the text, they observe what is there. Observation is a skill that can be enhanced by regular practice.

Fee and Stuart offer guidance for observation when they point out what readers should heed. They say, “There are two basic kinds of questions one should ask of every biblical passage: Those that relate to context and those that relate to content.”<sup>6</sup> To observe well, Bible students must pay attention to context and content. Fee and Stuart elaborate on what they mean by context and content:

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<sup>3</sup> Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching : The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids Mich: Baker Academic, 2001), 52.

<sup>4</sup> Oletta Wald, *The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study*, Newly rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), 13.

<sup>5</sup> Howard G. Hendricks and William Hendricks, *Living by the Book* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 47.

<sup>6</sup> Fee and Stuart, 26.

The historical context, which will differ from book to book, has to do with several things: the time and culture of the author and his readers, that is, the geographical, topographical, and political factors that are relevant to the author's setting; and the occasion of the book, letter, psalm, prophetic oracle, or other genre.<sup>7</sup>

This is what most people mean when they talk about reading something in its context. . . . Essentially, literary context means first that words only have meaning in sentences, and second that biblical sentences for the most part only have clear meaning in relation to preceding and succeeding sentences.<sup>8</sup>

The second major category of questions you need to ask of any text relates to the author's actual content. "Content" has to do with figuring out what the biblical writer is saying. There are tools which help to understand content.

In order to understand a passage of Scripture, one must develop the skill of observation. Carter, Duvall, and Hays, suggest a list of things to look for while observing a biblical passage.<sup>9</sup> Observation is only the first step in Bible study, however. Having observed well, one must then move on to interpretation.

Observation answers the question: What does it say? Interpretation answers the question: What does it mean? Hendricks and Hendricks help define interpretation:

I like to refer to the step of interpretation as the recreation process. We're attempting to stand in the author's shoes and re-create his experience—to think as he thought, to feel as he felt, and to decide as he decided. We're asking, What did this mean to him? before we ever ask, What does it mean to us?<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>9</sup> Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays, *Preaching God's Word : A Hands-on Approach to Preparing, Developing, and Delivering the Sermon* (Grand Rapids Mich: Zondervan, 2005), 46-50.

<sup>10</sup> Hendricks and Hendricks, 197.

Fee and Stuart say, “A text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its author or his or her readers.”<sup>11</sup> In order to find out what biblical text means to today, serious students must find out what it meant to its original readers.

Vines and Shaddix urge the serious Bible student to use all available resources during interpretation. “Every conceivable method of interpreting the meaning of the passage will be explored. No stone must be left unturned.”<sup>12</sup> Bible students cannot be satisfied with what they might think a passage means, instead, they must take advantage of the tools available for interpretation.

How do we know what tools are available to assist in Bible interpretation? James Stitzinger Jr., of The Master’s Seminary, assists us with a list of 750 books for an expositor’s library. The list includes recommendations in the areas of: bibliographic tools, Bibles, Old Testament tools, hermeneutics and exegesis, general reference works, concordances, works on archeology, geography, and history, theological works, and commentaries.<sup>13</sup> It is wise to ask preachers you respect about study resources.

The final major area in Bible study is application. The Bible was written not only as a source of knowledge but to change people. Transformation occurs only when application takes place. What is application? David Veerman defines it:

Simply stated, application is answering two questions: So What? and Now what? The first question asks, ‘Why is this passage important to me?’ The

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<sup>11</sup> Fee and Stuart, 74.

<sup>12</sup> Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit : How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 105.

<sup>13</sup> James F. Stitzinger, "Study Tools for Expository Preaching," in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, ed. Jr and the Master's Seminary faculty John MacArthur (Dallas: Word Pub., 1992), 188-208.

second asks, ‘What should I do about it today?’ Application focuses the truth of God’s Word on specific, life-related situations. It helps people understand what to do or how to use what they have learned. Application persuades people to act.<sup>14</sup>

Every time expositors sit down to study, application should be personal and begin with self.

Application is crucial to God’s purposes. Hendricks and Hendricks make a sobering statement when they say, “Observation plus interpretation without application equals abortion. In other words, every time you observe and interpret but fail to apply, you perform an abortion on the Scriptures in terms of their purpose.”<sup>15</sup> Robinson suggests the lack of application may explain the situation in many churches, “As a result many church members, having listened to orthodox sermons all their lives, may be practicing heretics.”<sup>16</sup> Application based on sound observation and solid interpretation is personally transformative.

John MacArthur offers seven basic questions that can help people apply the truth discovered in Bible study:<sup>17</sup>

1. Are there examples to follow?
2. Are there commands to obey?
3. Are there errors to avoid?

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<sup>14</sup> David Veerman, "Apply Within: A Method for Finding the Practical Response Called for in a Text," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching : A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Craig Brian Larson general editors Haddon Robinson (Grand Rapids Mich: Zondervan, 2005), 285-286.

<sup>15</sup> Hendricks and Hendicks, 283-284.

<sup>16</sup> Robinson, 86.

<sup>17</sup> John Jr. MacArthur, "A Study Method for Expository Preaching," in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, ed. Richard L. Mayhue (Dallas: Word Pub., 1992), 217-218.

4. Are there sins to forsake?
5. Are there promises to claim?
6. Are there new thoughts about God?
7. Are there principles to live by?

These questions are in no way exhaustive, but they provide a guide to application in Bible study.

In order to be good preachers preaching students must first be good Bible students. Instruction and practice in observation, interpretation, and application are essential. Available resources range from a basic primer level to complex scholarly works. Students will have to assess which resource best suits their abilities.

### Expository Preaching

An ancient preacher wrote, “[M]y son be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body” (Ecc. 12:12), and his warning applies to the range of books on preaching. A WorldCat Internet search on the keyword “preaching,” yielded over 28,000 references. The literature surveyed for this subsection, however, is limited to seven works on expository preaching published from 1982 until the present.

John R. W. Stott notes that, all would-be expositors find themselves in a noble tradition of preachers: “Jesus . . . the apostles . . . the church fathers . . . the reformers . . . the puritans . . . the evangelicals.”<sup>18</sup> One could add such preachers as D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Donald Grey Barnhouse, Ray Stedman, Stephen Olford, Adrian Rogers, E. K.

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<sup>18</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds : The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*, 1st American ed. (Grand Rapids Mich: W.B. Eerdmans, 1982), 16-47.

Bailey, Chuck Swindoll, David Jeremiah, Tony Evans, John MacArthur Jr., A. L.

Patterson Sr., R. A. Williams, Ralph West, Maurice Watson and Dr. Robert Smith.

Stott uncovers the roots of disenchantment with preaching and identifies three arguments marshaled against preaching: “the anti-authority mood, the cybernetics revolution, and the loss of confidence in the gospel.”<sup>19</sup> Stott argues cogently that the first two challenges can be overcome. However, loss of confidence in the gospel by those who preach, cannot. “Without a clear and confident message preaching is impossible.”<sup>20</sup>

Unwilling to become ensnared by choosing from a list of homiletic textbook preaching definitions, Stott says, “It is my contention that all true Christian preaching is expository preaching.”<sup>21</sup>

In his book *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, John MacArthur Jr. advocates verse-by-verse exposition of the Scriptures. MacArthur’s handling of the Biblical text comes from a reverence for the Bible itself. “Careful and diligent Bible study is the key to effective expository preaching. Because the Bible is God’s holy Word, it must be treated with respect, not expounded flippantly or carelessly.”<sup>22</sup> MacArthur believes in contextualizing the preaching passage in order to discern its significance. Comparing expository preaching with reading a personal letter, MacArthur says, “If I really want to comprehend the letter—what is going on, the tone, the spirit, the attitude, and the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 50-51.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>22</sup> MacArthur, 209.

purpose—I must start from the beginning and go to the end of each one. If that is true of personal correspondence, then how much more is it so of divine revelation.<sup>23</sup>

MacArthur cannot be accused on being a man, “beating into the air;” he preaches for a verdict, and he wants a decision to be made. “I believe the goal of preaching is to compel people to make a decision. I want people who listen to me to understand exactly what God’s Word demands of them when I am through. Then they must say either, ‘Yes, I will do what God says,’ or ‘No, I won’t do what God says.’”<sup>24</sup>

Compared to Haddon Robinson and others, MacArthur has a restricted philosophy on sermon illustration. When asked, “Why do you preach predominantly from the New Testament?” MacArthur responds,

What we find is we must primarily preach Christ and herald the new covenant. . . . At the same time, we draw on the illustrative material in the Old Testament. . . . The Old Testament also becomes the great source of illustrative material as we reach back to get some of the magnificence and fullness of God before the cross.<sup>25</sup>

MacArthur demeans Old Testament writers when he uses them primarily for illustrative material because they are theologians teaching through narrative, poetry, prophecy, and wisdom literature.

Although Jesus used illustrations from everyday life in Israel, MacArthur makes it clear that one reason he prefers biblical illustrations is “because they are God’s choice of

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<sup>23</sup> John MacArthur, "Frequently Asked Questions About Expository Preaching," in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, ed. Jr and the Master's Seminary faculty John MacArthur (Dallas: Word Pub., 1992), 341.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 343.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 341.

illustrative material.”<sup>26</sup> His philosophy on illustrating aside, MacArthur makes a compelling argument for rediscovering expository preaching.

In their book *Anointed Expository Preaching*, Stephen and David Olford advise preachers everywhere to “Walk the talk.” The Olfords believe that holy living and good preaching are inseparable, and the purpose statement of the Olford Center for Biblical Preaching reflects their belief: “The Institute for Biblical Preaching is to equip and encourage pastors and lay leaders in expository preaching and exemplary living.”<sup>27</sup>

The Olfords refer to the “sacred anointing,” as the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching; however, the preacher must be a Godly person in order to experience this anointing. “God can only bless with the anointing of His Holy Spirit those who pursue a life of holiness.”<sup>28</sup> The anointing transforms one’s life and one’s sermon, “Only the Holy Spirit can transform a manuscript into a message.”<sup>29</sup> The Olfords challenge preachers to live lives that match the gospel they proclaim.

Vines and Shaddix collaborated to present a basic method of sermon preparation, which seeks to maintain a balance between homiletic theory and pastoral reality. *Power in the Pulpit* is a revision and expansion of two earlier books by Jerry Vines; it covers both preparation and presentation of a biblical sermon.

<sup>26</sup> MacArthur, "A Study Method for Expository Preaching," 222.

<sup>27</sup> Stephen F. Olford and David L. Olford, *Anointed Expository Preaching* (Nashville Tenn: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 1-2.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 218.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 214.

In order to cut through much of what passes as preaching under the guise of pulpit activity, Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix in *Power in the Pulpit* provide clear standards for what should constitute genuine preaching by offering the following criteria:

- 1) The mode: oral communication. “Preaching, by and large, is oral communication.”<sup>30</sup>
- 2) The message: biblical truth. “Preaching has a specific content—the Word of God as revealed in the Bible.”<sup>31</sup>
- 3) The medium: Holy Spirit/human personality. “The message of the Bible is communicated through a twofold medium: the Holy Spirit and a human personality.”<sup>32</sup>
- 4) The mark: given audience. “Preaching is directed intentionally at a given audience.”<sup>33</sup>
- 5) The motive: positive response. The preaching event is driven by the desire to see people respond positively to God’s Word.”<sup>34</sup>

In order to achieve balance in preparation for preaching and pastoral ministry, Vines and Shaddix offer sage advice,

Do not cloister yourself in your study and fail to relate to the outside world. The preacher who comes from his ivory tower to the pulpit on Sunday morning will lack the ring of reality in what he has to say. Constantly test your studies in the crucible of daily life and ministry.<sup>35</sup>

Ramesh Richard in *Preparing Expository Sermons* uses the analogy of an artist carving a wood sculpture to describe the sermon preparation process: “The Bible is what

<sup>30</sup> Vines and Shaddix, 24.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 81.

God has made; sermons are what we make with what God made.”<sup>36</sup> Richard makes the text crucial to proper sermon development.

Richard points out two negative extremes in approaching preaching:

[S]ome preachers do not believe that the Bible is what God made. Unconverted preachers occupy pulpits all across our land. . . . Still other preachers do not believe that preachers must prepare a sermon. They do not work hard toward the pulpit ministry. In an offhanded manner, they typically expect to be divinely filled at the threshold of the sermonic moment.<sup>37</sup>

In addressing the why of expository preaching, Richard says that the purpose of expository preaching is to inform the mind so that hearers understand God’s truth, instruct the heart so that feelings are genuine, and influence behavior so that hearers obey God’s mandates.<sup>38</sup> Good preaching produces fruitful lives.

In *Biblical Preaching*, Haddon Robinson contends that expository preaching is more a philosophy than a method of preparing sermons. His definition does not limit expository sermons to a single specific form:

Expository preaching at its core is more a philosophy than a method. Whether or not we can be called expositors starts with our purpose and with the honest answer to the question: ‘Do you, as a preacher, endeavor to bend your thought to the Scriptures, or do you use the Scriptures to support your thought?’<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ramesh Richard and Ramesh Richard, *Preparing Expository Sermons : A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids Mich: Baker Books, 2001), 15.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

<sup>39</sup> Robinson, 22.

Robinson's major thesis is, preaching involves the communication of a biblical idea or concept, making a sermon "a bullet, not buckshot." "Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of Scripture."<sup>40</sup>

According to Robinson, however, discovering the biblical idea is insufficient. He says, "To preach effectively, expositors must be involved in three different worlds: the world of the Bible, the modern world, and the particular world in which we are called to preach."<sup>41</sup>

Robinson promotes use of illustrations as a way of "bringing your sermons down to life."<sup>42</sup> Good illustration can drive ideas home by showing the audience what obeying God looks like in everyday life. "People today need applications that show them "how to do it," and they need plenty of them."<sup>43</sup> Unlike MacArthur, Robinson believes "the most powerful illustrations are those where your personal experience overlaps your listener's personal experience."<sup>44</sup>

Bryan Chapell in *Christ-Centered Preaching* makes a major contribution to biblical preaching by introducing the key concept of the "Fallen Condition Focus

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 157.

(FCF).<sup>45</sup> This concept relates to the sermon's purpose. "The Fallen Condition Focus (FCF) is the mutual human condition that contemporary believers share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God's people to glorify and enjoy him."<sup>46</sup> This concept is powerful because one immediately identifies with biblical characters and their struggles; the same ills that plagued them plague current hearers. Theologically the Fallen Condition Focus finds support in the doctrine of depravity.

Chapell labels his method "a redemptive approach to preaching," because the gospel immediately becomes good news to sinners and offers redemption from their sinfulness:

Every passage was written to bring glory to God by addressing some aspect(s) of our fallen condition (affecting faith and/or practice with divine provision). By correction, warning, diagnosis, and/or healing of this fallenness, a text reveals God's means for enabling his people to glorify him and know his grace both in the passage's original context and in the present situation.<sup>47</sup>

Like other authors reviewed in this chapter, Chapell emphasizes the importance of application in preaching. He says, "Preaching without application may serve the mind, but preaching with application results in service to Christ."<sup>48</sup> Chapell keeps in mind the goal of preaching, which goes beyond mental education to engender spiritual

<sup>45</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching : Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids Mich: Baker Academic, 2005), 48.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 271.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 54.

transformation. All of the authors presented in this section believe that the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16), and are committed to training others to preach God’s Word.

### Black Preaching

The intended audience of the preaching handbook presented in chapter 4 is African-American preachers with little to no formal training in preaching. Much of what these preachers learn about preaching in the Black tradition will come from observation and personal study. This subsection surveys significant literature on Black preaching in particular.

What is Black preaching? Henry Mitchell, a significant figure in African-American homiletics, discusses the variety of preaching styles. In *Black Preaching*, Mitchell says, “The key to understanding the different styles of preaching is in the word culture. Preaching is carried out in the idiom, imagery, style, and world view of a particular people.”<sup>49</sup> Consequently, for Mitchell, Black preaching is preaching carried out in the idiom, imagery, style, and worldview of Black people. It is preaching clothed in Black culture.

Mitchell believes emphatically that preaching must be declared in the language and culture of one’s audience. “Black preaching requires the use of Black language.”<sup>50</sup> Some Black seminarians who attend White schools experience dissonance when they

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<sup>49</sup> Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Preaching : The Recovery of a Powerful Art* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 11.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 78.

preach in “standard English;” Black congregations desire a preacher who sounds familiar. It has always been important for the preacher in the pulpit to speak the language of the person in the pew.

In a discussion about training Black preachers, Mitchell identifies an interesting phenomenon: “Black preachers have always served a kind of apprenticeship, sometimes formal but more often informal, under a known master of the craft of preaching. . . . Black preaching is often caught as much as taught.”<sup>51</sup> Although he encourages formal training, Mitchell believes the best of Black preaching is transferred in the apprenticeship relationship. Much of the “schooling” of black preachers takes place in worship services listening to and experiencing sermons. This approach to teaching parallels the approaches described in chapter 2 and found common in the Old and New Testaments. The master serves as an example emulated by the beginner.

In talking about the characteristics of the best of Black preaching Mitchell says it is Bible-based, creative in its use of scholarship, imaginatively elaborate, easily grasped, culturally affirming, steeped in storytelling, rhythmic, dialogical, and celebratory in expression.<sup>52</sup> The most effective preaching in the Black tradition, has its roots in the biblical text, uses creative and imaginative storytelling, is based on sound scholarship, involves dialogue with the congregation, ends in celebration, and is so clear that even a child can understand it.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 56-75.

The concept of celebration is important in Black preaching. What is celebration? “Instead of simply winding down and taking a seat, the preacher-performing-artist engages in a final, triumphant or celebratory expression of the theme or the resolution of the conflict or issue.”<sup>53</sup> For some, celebration is the aspect of the sermon that characterizes it as truly Black. In many Black congregations celebration is more than expected, it is demanded; however, those unfamiliar with celebration might see it as a purely emotional display.

A major criticism of Black preaching is, “It’s too emotional.” Mitchell sees the roots of inhibition of emotion in worship tied to “an ancient Greek dualism of flesh and spirit.”<sup>54</sup> This dichotomy according to Mitchell left emotions with a negative representation. He says, “All too often the term emotion itself has suffered from gross misrepresentation. All too often the term seems to connote only the lower emotions: fear, lust, hate, prejudice, and paranoid mistrust.”<sup>55</sup> Mitchell staunchly defends and advocates celebration because, “People relate to and remember what they celebrate, and it influences their behavior.”<sup>56</sup> A cardinal sin of the Black pulpit is irrelevant celebration. Good meat makes its own gravy and a preacher should not be caught using “store bought” gravy out of a can!

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<sup>53</sup> Henry H. Mitchell, *Celebration and Experience in Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 61.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>56</sup> Mitchell, *Black Preaching : The Recovery of a Powerful Art*, 121.

Beginning where Mitchell left off, Frank Thomas reinforces the importance of celebration in Black preaching and worship. In *They Like to never Quit Praisin' God*, Frank Thomas contends that the nature and purpose of African-American preaching is to help people experience the assurance of the grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to Thomas, “Whenever grace is experienced and appropriated, the natural response is one of celebration and praise to God.”<sup>57</sup> One no more has to command people to celebrate who have experienced grace, than one has to command people to celebrate who have just won the lottery. It is a natural response.

Celebration is a natural response to good news, and celebration helps the preacher influence behavior. Thomas says, “Celebration helps the preacher motivate the people through positive reinforcement of the gospel.”<sup>58</sup> Sermons are designed to influence behavior and celebration is one way to motivate positively through reinforcement of the good news of Jesus Christ.

Close to the importance of celebration in Black preaching is dialogue between pulpit and pew. Warren Stewart in *Interpreting God's Word in Black Preaching* says, “There is probably no other context in the United States of America in which preaching as dialogue has been so evident, vital, and authentic as in the Black church.”<sup>59</sup> Black preaching is characteristically dialogical and preachers receive feedback that informs

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<sup>57</sup> Frank A. Thomas, *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God : The Role of Celebration in Preaching* (Cleveland Ohio: United Church Press, 1997), 19.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>59</sup> Warren H. Stewart, *Interpreting God's Word in Black Preaching* (Valley Forge PA: Judson Press, 1984), 62.

them about their sermons. Comments such as, “Make it plain”, “I see where you’re going”, or “You’re on my street preacher”, help the preacher gauge how he is doing.

Evans Crawford and Thomas Troeger in their book *The Hum* devised a five point sermon evaluation system based on the typical responses in a Black church from: 1. Help ‘em Lord!; 2. Well?; 3. That’s all right!; 4. Amen; to 5. Glory Hallelujah.<sup>60</sup> The goal of preachers is to take their listeners from “Help ‘em Lord!” to “Glory Hallelujah!” Crawford suggests ways to accomplish this objective.

Crawford explains the five levels: “Help ‘em Lord!” is the congregation praying with preachers as they struggle to get their sermons off the ground. “Well?” is preachers setting up the sermons and congregations starting to see where they are headed. “That’s all right!” is the congregation clearly seeing the possibility of good news. “Amen!” is the congregation testifying to the truth of the preached Word. Crawford recommends Black preachers craft their sermons in ways that consider their dialogue with their audiences.

Besides celebration and dialogue, what other elements make up Black preaching? Cleophus LaRue identifies, describes, and analyzes the distinctive elements that make up Black preaching at its best. Mitchell characterizes Black preaching as preaching that reflects Black culture, while LaRue in *The Heart of Black Preaching* characterizes Black preaching as containing five distinctive domains that reflect the Black experience.

According to LaRue, “Personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, corporate concerns,

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<sup>60</sup> Evans E. Crawford and Thomas H. Troeger, *The Hum : Call and Response in African American Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 13-15.

and maintenance of the institutional church are the elements that characterize Black preaching.<sup>61</sup>

Black preaching reflects the domain of “personal piety” when preaching addresses issues like: prayer, personal discipline, moral conduct, and a right relationship with God.<sup>62</sup> A good Black sermon encourages one to do better as an individual Christian in one’s walk with the Lord.

In Black preaching “care of the soul” refers to “that area of experience that focuses on the well-being of individuals. . . . it is preeminently the renewal of life in the image of Christ.”<sup>63</sup> Black preaching aspires to encourage healing and wholeness in people.

LaRue categorizes matters pertaining to “racism, sexism, ageism, and other forms of discrimination” within the realm of “social justice.”<sup>64</sup> This is an area of disparity between White and Black pulpits. Whites seem far more interested in fighting homosexuality and abortion than racism.

“Corporate concerns” speak to issues that “particularly and peculiarly affect Black life.”<sup>65</sup> Although social justice issues may be included, “corporate concerns” focuses on such issues as: the Black family, responsible fatherhood, teen-age pregnancy,

<sup>61</sup> Cleophus James LaRue and NetLibrary Inc., *The Heart of Black Preaching*, 1st ed. (Louisville Ky: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 21-25.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

and Black-on-Black crime. In many cases, corporate concerns involve issues which Blacks must take personal responsible for correcting.

Because the Black church has been so instrumental in the Black community, “maintenance of the institutional church” is vital. LaRue says this is why “much preaching in Black pulpits is directed toward the maintenance of the institution.”<sup>66</sup> This type of preaching is a form of discipleship training and makes sure that the church will continue to thrive both physically and spiritually.

In *Preaching in Black and White*, authors E. K. Bailey and Warren Wiersbe provide one of the more unique publications on preaching in recent years: “This book serves as groundbreaking attempt to bring together a noted black preacher and a noted white preacher to interact on the dynamics of pulpit ministry and what we can learn from each other’s traditions and differing perspectives.”<sup>67</sup>

One author is Black, the other White and both are excellent preachers who bring a wealth of preaching experience and wisdom to the discussion. *Preaching in Black and White* can be beneficial to practitioners of both camps if they will listen to each other with open ears and minds. The Bailey-Wiersbe discussion involves only two people and their respective experiences. It would be a good idea for the conversation to be joined by other voices.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>67</sup> E. K. Bailey and Warren W. Wiersbe, *Preaching in Black & White : What We Can Learn from Each Other* (Grand Rapids Mich: Zondervan, 2003), 9.

## CHAPTER 4

### A MANUAL FOR THE PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITORY SERMONS WHILE MAINTAINING ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DISTINCTIVENESS

This chapter constitutes the handbook for the development and delivery of expository sermons in the African-American tradition that will be used to teach African American pastors without formal education how to preach biblically. The handbook is based on the theological and theoretical rationale for preparing and delivering Black biblical sermons discussed in chapters 2 and 3. The teaching handbook addresses the practical steps in preparing and delivering Black expository sermons.

The handbook is reproduced on the following pages in its entirety.

A Handbook  
for the  
Development and Delivery  
of  
Expository Sermons  
in the  
African-American Tradition  
  
by  
LaMonte King

## Welcome to Expository Preaching

I started preaching by imitating the preachers I was exposed to growing up. In my first attempt at preaching, I read a text from the Bible, talked about the author, the audience he was writing to, talked some more about the Bible in general, and then closed the sermon by recounting the story of how Jesus died on Calvary and got up with all power in his hands early Sunday morning. This was my attempt at sounding like the preachers I had heard.

As I continued to preach, I became more comfortable in the pulpit and my skills improved. My only problem was when a sermon went well, I didn't know why. I was apt to believe my success had to do with the volume of the sound system, my lucky tie, or a particularly lively congregation that responded with hearty amens. I wasn't sure what caused a sermon to pass or to flunk.

As time went on, I made it my mission to discover what made a sermon effective. While engaged in the search for what made for good preaching, I came across Biblical Preaching by Haddon Robinson. With his "Big Idea" expository preaching, Robinson gave me a target at which to aim. I continue to learn but desire to share what I have picked up.

This handbook is designed to assist those who would like a target to aim at. You will learn how to consistently develop and deliver solid sermons that are clear, accurate, biblical, and relevant while being yourself. It is my wish that a portion of the blessing I have received in preaching instruction be passed on to you. Welcome to expository preaching.

### What is Expository Preaching?

- A. Faris D. Whitesell helps us help us in understanding what expository preaching is *not*:<sup>1</sup>
1. It is not a commentary running from word to word and verse to verse without unity, outline, and pervasive drive.
  2. It is not rambling comments and offhand remarks about a passage without a background of thorough exegesis and logical order.
  3. It is not a mass of disconnected suggestions and inferences based on the surface meaning of a passage but not sustained by a depth-and-breadth study of the text.
  4. It is not pure exegesis, no matter how scholarly, if it lacks a theme, thesis, outline, and development.
  5. It is not a mere structural outline of a passage with a few supporting comments but without order.
  6. It is not a typical homily using scattered parts of a passage but omitting discussion of other equally important parts.
  7. It is not a chopped up collection of grammatical findings and quotations from commentaries without a fusing of these elements into a smooth, flowing, interesting, and compelling message.
  8. It is not a Sunday-school-lesson type discussion that has an outline of the contents, informality, and fervency but lacks sermonic structure and rhetorical ingredients.
  9. It is not a Bible reading that links a number of scattered passages treating a common theme but fails to handle any of them in a thorough, grammatical, and contextual manner.
  10. It is not the ordinary devotional or prayer-meeting talk that combines running commentary, rambling remarks, disconnected suggestions, and personal

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<sup>1</sup> Faris D. Whitesell, *Power in Expository Preaching* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1963), vii-viii.

reactions into a semi-inspirational discussion but lacks the benefit of the basic exegetical-contextual study and persuasive elements.

B. Haddon W. Robinson helps us with what expository preaching is:<sup>2</sup>

1. Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept.
2. Derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context,
3. Which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher,
4. Then through the preacher, applies to the hearers.

C. Another definition of expository preaching is:

- Preaching what the Bible says
- Preaching in a way that people can understand
- Preaching for the purpose the Bible supports
- Preaching specifically to your audience

D. The essence of biblical preaching is that it is:

- Accurate
- Biblical
- Clear
- Relevant

“It is my contention that all true Christian preaching is expository preaching”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 21.

<sup>3</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), 125.

## Why is Expository Preaching Important?

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. (2 Tim. 3:16)

Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. (Acts 20:26-27)

### A. What expository preaching does for the congregation:

1. Expository preaching builds the congregation's Bible knowledge.
2. Expository preaching gives the congregation a balanced diet of preaching.
3. Expository preaching arouses an appetite for the Word of God.
4. Expository preaching promotes spiritual growth in the congregation.
5. Expository preaching unleashes the power of God.
6. Expository preaching builds a Bible bringing congregation.
7. Expository preaching equips the congregation for works of service.

### B. What expository preaching does for the preacher:

1. Expository preaching develops the preacher as a person of God's Word.
2. Expository preaching best honors the command to "Preach the Word."
3. Expository preaching forces the preacher to deal with tough passages.
4. Expository preaching promotes spiritual growth in the preacher.
5. Expository preaching relieves the anxiety about what to preach next.
6. Expository preaching keeps the preacher out of ruts and off hobbyhorses.
7. Expository preaching puts God's authority behind the sermon.

**Exercises: What is Expository Preaching?**

1. Are the following sermons expository? If not, why not?

Example:

**Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.” (Hebrews 12:1)**

- I. The Christian race starts when we get saved.
- II. The Christian race is not just on Sundays.
- III. The Christian race ends at death.

Is this outline expository? Why/why not:

Example:

**Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)**

- I. The Thessalonians are to rejoice at all times.
- II. The Thessalonians are to pray without ceasing.
- III. The Thessalonians are to thank God in all circumstances.

Is this outline expository? Why/why not:

2. List three benefits of expository preaching for the congregation:

3. List three benefits of expository preaching for the preacher:

## The Stages of Sermon Preparation

### Stage 1—Select and Study the Text

A biblical sermon requires a text. In biblical preaching the text becomes the material or fabric to be woven into the sermon. When we declare a text from the pulpit, the sermon to follow should reflect that specific biblical passage in its points, theme, and message. It should be clear to the audience that the scriptural passage is the foundation of the sermon.<sup>4</sup> What are some ways to choose a text?

A. Personal Study and Reading the Bible.

B. Needs of the Congregation.

C. Book or Series

E. Church Calendar or Events

F. Lectionary

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<sup>4</sup> Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays, *Preaching God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Preparing, Developing, and Delivering the Sermon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 23.

*Select Your Passage*

How do you decide what to preach on?

- A. You have an understanding of the needs of your congregation.

Pro: Your sermon can be relevant and timely.

Con: You may be wrong in what you think the congregation needs.

- B. You have an understanding of the contents of the Bible.

Pro: You have a wide range to choose from.

Con: Knowing the Bible is not enough you must also know your hearers.

- C. You follow a lectionary.

Pro: You don't have to agonize over what to preach each week.

You get a well-rounded tour of Scripture.

You are forced to preach on texts you might not normally preach.

Con: The passage chosen for you may not be relevant to your hearers.

- D. You decide to preach through a book of the Bible.

Pro: You don't have to agonize over what to preach each week.

You are forced to preach on texts you might not otherwise touch.

Con: The series may become boring and drawn out.

- E. You decide to preach on a certain topic.

Pro: You may pick the right text

Con: You may be biased in what you choose to preach on.

### *Study Your Passage*

Read the passage.

- Read the passage in your regular English Bible translation.

**KJV James 1:2** My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; <sup>3</sup> Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

- Read the passage in other English translations (For example, ESV, NAU, NIV, NJB, NLT).

**ESV James 1:2** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**NAU James 1:2** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**NIV James 1:2** Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

**NJB James 1:2** My brothers, consider it a great joy when trials of many kinds come upon you, <sup>3</sup> for you well know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance, and <sup>4</sup> perseverance must complete its work so that you will become fully developed, complete, not deficient in any way.

**NLT James 1:2** Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. <sup>3</sup> For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.

- C. Read and re-read the passage under consideration.
1. Read the text carefully, noticing the details.
  2. Read prayerfully, asking God to open your eyes (Psalm 119:18).
  3. Read purposefully, taking notes of what you see.
  4. Read curiously, asking what is the biblical author saying?

Question the Biblical text:

1. What is the purpose of this book?
2. Who wrote this book?
3. To whom was this book written?
4. What is the historical situation in the text?
5. When was this book written?
6. Why are these commands, warnings, and/or exhortations given?
7. What response is being called for in this passage?

Observe the passage regarding issues of words which may be important in your understanding of the passage:

- A. Observe Words
1. Long words: (i.e. predestined, transfigured, consecrate)
  2. Unusual words: (i.e. cubit, ox goad, denarius)
  3. Repeated words: (i.e. “worry” in Matthew 6:25-34)
- B. Observe Relationships
1. Grammatical relationships: How words are put together in the text, such as the relationships between tenses (past, present, future), number (singular, plural), and gender (masculine or feminine).

2. Human relationships: What do we today have in common with the characters in your Bible passage (i.e. struggles, fears, worries, etc.)? How are we different?
3. Time/or place relationships: When did the events in the passage take place? Where did the events of the passage take place?
4. Character relationships: Who are the main characters in your passage? What is the relationship between them? How do they feel about each other?
5. Context: What comes before and after the passage you are studying? Will you need to consider a larger portion of Scripture to understand your passage?
  - a. The context of the Bible—The entire Bible is one grand story; God's view of history—*His story*.
  - b. The context of the book—Observe the contents of the book to understand its purpose, this will in turn help you interpret it before you expound it.
  - c. The context of the text—The basic unit of Bible study is not the verse or the sentence but the paragraph. Study paragraphs and not just individual verses.
6. Type of literature relationships: This has to do with the type or kind of biblical literature in which a passage is found such as:
  - a. *Teaching*: Didactic or discourse material like Jesus' sermons or the Epistles
  - b. *Narratives*: Narration of historical events (Bible stories)
  - c. *Poetry*: Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and others
  - d. *Parables*: Primarily in the four Gospels
  - e. *Prophetic*: Futuristic books like sections of Daniel, Ezekiel, Revelation, and also the major and minor prophets of the Old Testament

### Ask Questions

You must ask questions, therein lies the art of discovery in any discipline. Ask questions of the words and the relationships between the words you have marked as important in understanding a text. There are four types of questions:

- A. Background questions such as: author, date, setting, recipients, and major themes.
- B. Fact questions: In the following passage, is it true that prayer brings peace?

**Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)**

- C. Meaning questions: In the following passage, what does “pray without ceasing” mean?

**Pray without ceasing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16)**

- D. Application Questions: In the following passage, how can we go into our secret closet? What is involved in closing the door?

**But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:6)**

*Example of Study Observations*

**KJV James 1:2** My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; <sup>3</sup> Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

1. This is a New Testament epistle/letter.
2. James is the author of this passage.
3. James was the biological brother of Jesus (Gal. 1:19).
4. James didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah until after the resurrection.
5. James is writing to Christians, he uses the terms "brother" (v. 2).
6. How does one "count it all joy"? (v.2).
7. What are "divers" temptations? (v.2).
8. There are some trials that we "fall into"; how does this happen?
9. James implies that Christians facing trials know something (v.3).
10. In trials it is our "faith" that is being tested (v.3).

*Commentary Use*

After you have studied the passage yourself and still have some questions, consult good commentaries, in this order:

- A. Heavyweights: (examples)
- B. Mid-level: (examples)
- C. Preaching: (examples)

**Exercises: Select and Study the Text**

1. If your congregation was having problems with unity what passage might you preach on? Why?

2. Why is it important to read a passage in several translations?

3. Do a brief background study of Philemon. (Include such items as: author, date, recipients, setting, and major themes).

4. Make at least 15 observations on Romans 5:1-5:

5. Observe the passage below and list questions you want answered:

**Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! (2 Corinthians 12:7)**

What questions would you explore for further study?

## Stage 2— Discover the Main Truth of the Biblical Text

Every sermon should have a theme, and that theme should be the theme of the portion of Scripture on which it is based.<sup>5</sup>

The best teachers of preaching have proven that the best messages have one idea point rather than many scattered ideas. Therefore before you can develop your sermon, you must figure out what that major idea should be. The good news is you don't have to invent a major idea; the biblical writer has supplied it for you. "Translators have divided biblical texts into paragraphs, each of which has one major, dominant, identifiable thought. In fact, the very definition of a paragraph is that it proposes one cardinal thought."<sup>6</sup> It is your job as an expositor to discover the one main idea of the biblical author based on a study of the text.

In other words, the main idea of the biblical author becomes your main idea as you work toward developing the sermon. We will call this main idea derived from the Bible the "main truth of the text" (MTT). Each main truth of the text is made up of two parts: topic and focus.

In this section of the handbook you will learn how to discover the main truth of the biblical author and phrase that idea in a single sentence statement.

- A. The main truth of the text is the single sentence that captures the central idea of the biblical passage you are studying.

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<sup>5</sup> Donald G. Miller, *The Way to Biblical Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1957), 55.

<sup>6</sup> Ramesh Richard, *Preparing Expository Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 65.

B. The main truth of the text (MTT) is made up of a topic and a focus.

1. The topic (also known as the subject, theme, thesis) is:

- a. What the biblical writer is talking about
- b. What is being discussed in the text
- c. The topic under discussion

2. The focus (complement, thrust, assertion) is:

- a. What the biblical writer is saying about what he is talking about
- b. What is being said about what is being discussed
- c. What is being said about the topic under discussion

C. How to identify the main truth of the text (MTT). Refer to the following text.

**But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.  
(James 1:5)**

1. The topic tells us what the biblical writer is talking about and should be specific. The topic should be accurate and adequate. In our verse above the topic would be: *How to get wisdom*
2. The focus tells us what the biblical writer is saying about what he is talking about. The focus limits and specifies the topic. In our text above the focus would be, “by asking God.” James is saying the way to get wisdom is by asking God.
3. The main truth of the text (MTT) is a combination of the topic and the focus. In our text above the main truth of the text is: “James says one gets wisdom by asking God.” Notice that the includes both topic and focus.

**Exercises: Discover the Main Truth of the Text**

1. The two components of the main truth of the text are the t\_\_\_\_\_ and the f\_\_\_\_\_.
  
2. Discover the (MTT) of each of these passages:

**Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. (Matthew 5:7)**

Topic: The Merciful \_\_\_\_\_

Focus: What will happen to the merciful? \_\_\_\_\_

Main Truth of Text: The merciful shall receive mercy \_\_\_\_\_

**Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1)**

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

Main truth of Text: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)**

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

Main truth of Text: \_\_\_\_\_

**I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13)**

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

Main truth of Text: \_\_\_\_\_

### Stage 3—Expand the Idea of the Biblical Text

When we make a declarative statement we can do only four things with it:

- A. We can restate it.
- B. We can explain it.
- C. We can prove it.
- D. We can apply it.<sup>7</sup>

In order to expand the main truth of the text (MTT), we must submit it to three developmental questions:<sup>8</sup>

- A. What does it mean?
- B. Is it true?
- C. What difference does it make?

We will now look at these questions in more depth.

- A. What does this mean?
  - 1. Centers on explanation
  - 2. Deals with understanding
  - 3. Clarifies
- B. Is it true?
  - 1. Centers on proof
  - 2. Deals with belief
  - 3. Validates

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<sup>7</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 75.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 77-86.

C. What difference does it make?

1. Centers on application
2. Deals with behavior
3. Applies

Let's try an example:

**And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)**

What needs to be explained?

What needs to be proven?

What needs to be applied?

Although a verse may require all three developmental questions, usually one question dominates. The dominant developmental question is what you should use.

### Exercises: Expanding the Idea

1. List the three things that can be done with a statement of truth:
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
2. Decide which developmental question is most appropriate for the following passages:

**Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.**  
**(Matthew 9:17)**

Main truth of the text: Old wineskins are too brittle to hold new wine

Developmental question: What does this mean?

**And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**  
**(Romans 8:28)**

Main truth of the text: \_\_\_\_\_

Developmental question: \_\_\_\_\_

**Train up a child in the way he should go,**

**And even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)**

Main truth of the text: \_\_\_\_\_

Developmental question: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Stage 4—Discovering the Purpose of the Sermon

“Why are you preaching this sermon?” This is a question that preachers ought to ask before they preach. It is not enough to preach a sermon merely because it’s 11:00 A.M. Sunday morning. Donald Miller has some wise words to share about the importance of purpose:

Fortunate is the man who discovers thus early in his ministry that every sermon should have a specific purpose and that clear aim should be taken to achieve that goal. Otherwise he will fall into the habit of doing what the oft-quoted Archbishop Whately described as aiming at nothing, and hitting it! And no matter how brilliant or clever or packed with content a sermon may be, if it does not have a clear purpose in view and if everything in it is not directed to the fulfillment of that purpose, it can be nothing but a ‘bewildered rhapsody,’ a ‘tragedy of aimlessness.’<sup>9</sup>

All sermons are preached for a purpose. The purpose is what you expect to happen because of the sermon; it is a target. Haddon Robinson emphasizes the futility in preaching a sermon without a clear purpose. “No matter how brilliant or biblical a sermon is, without a definite purpose it is not worth preaching.”<sup>10</sup> Make sure your sermon aims at something.

The sermon purpose must be consistent with the biblical purpose. Many sermons fail at this point because they do not reflect what the biblical writer had in mind. The purpose of the sermon should be stated in measurable terms. Once discovered, the

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<sup>9</sup> Miller, *The Way to Biblical Preaching*, 113.

<sup>10</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 106.

sermon purpose should be written out. What specifically do you want to happen in the life of the listener as a result of this sermon being preached?

#### A. Examples of Purpose Statements

1. The listener should understand grace.
2. The listener will be able to list the fruit of the spirit.
3. The listener should be grateful her sins are forgiven.
4. The listener should pray about a current challenge in his/her life.

**Table 1. Action Verbs Useful for Expository Sermon Purpose Statements<sup>11</sup>**

If the goal is:	Knowledge	Insight	Attitude	Skill
Then the verb can be:	List State Enumerate Recite Recall Write Identity	Examine Discern Compare Contrast Classify Select Choose	Appreciate Desire to View Plan Develop Determine to Be convinced of	Interpret Apply Internalize Produce Use Practice Study

#### B. The benefits of having a clear purpose:<sup>12</sup>

1. Focuses the introduction of the sermon on the need that will be raised in the sermon
2. Determines what must be included and/or excluded in the body of the sermon
3. Influences the sermon's conclusion and application
4. Helps in choosing the illustrations that will accomplish the purpose of the sermon

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>12</sup> Richard, *Preparing Expository Sermons*, 78.

5. Provides a more objective way to measure the proficiency or success of the sermon
6. Directly contributes to the formulating the main truth of the text (MTT)

### Exercises: Discover the Sermon Purpose

1. List an appropriate purpose for each sermon. The first passage is an example:

**Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart. (Luke 18:1)**

Topic: When we should pray

Focus: People ought to pray always

Main Truth: People ought to always pray

Purpose: To challenge people to pray consistently

**Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness.” (1 Peter 5:2)**

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Truth: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. (Proverbs 27:1)**

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Truth: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

### Stage 5—Stating the Main Truth of the Sermon

Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of Scripture.<sup>13</sup>

Each feature of a well-wrought message reflects, refines, and/or develops one major idea.<sup>14</sup>

We have discussed the main truth of the text (MTT) and now we will discuss the main truth of the sermon (MTS). What is the primary difference? The main truth of the text is a statement regarding the biblical text and relates to the biblical world. The main truth of the sermon is a statement regarding the sermon and it relates to the contemporary listener.

Example:

(MTT): Jesus told the disciples to pray always.

(MTS): As a Christian, you must pray consistently.

The main truth of the sermon is crucial. Listen to John Henry Jowett:

I have the conviction that no sermon is ready for preaching, not ready for writing out, until we can express its theme in a short, pregnant sentence as clear as crystal. . . . I do not think any sermon ought to be preached or even written, until that sentence has emerged, clear and lucid as a cloudless moon.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 35.

<sup>14</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 44.

<sup>15</sup> John Henry Jowett, *The Preacher, His Life and Work: Yale Lectures*, The Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching, Yale University, 1911-12. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1912), 133.

The main truth of the sermon (MTS) is the take home truth. It's what you want your listeners to remember and apply after the sermon is over. In order to come up with the (MTS), two questions must be asked:

**Topic:** What am *I* talking about?

**Focus:** What am *I* saying about what I'm talking about?

Remember, the difference between the main truth of the text (MTT) and the main truth of the sermon (MTS) is: The main truth of the text is what the **biblical author** is talking about and the main truth of the sermon is what **you** are talking about. The sermon idea is the text idea in present-day language making it relevant to today's listeners. The sermon truth must be addressed to your specific listeners. Haddon Robinson recommends, "In light of the audience's knowledge and experience, think through your exegetical idea and state it in the most exact, memorable sentence possible."<sup>16</sup>

It is worth the payoff to work hard at phrasing the main truth of the sermon because, if it is well stated, people will remember it and apply it to their lives. The main truth of the sermon should be stated:<sup>17</sup>

- Simply and memorably
- In concrete and familiar words
- In a way that focuses on a response
- In a way that audience members know you are speaking to them

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<sup>16</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 103.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 105-106.

### Stage 6—Structuring the Sermon

The basic sermon form consists of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The introduction introduces the topic or subject of discussion. The body elaborates on the topic or subject. And, the conclusion draws the topic or subject to a close. We will discuss the introduction and conclusion in depth at stage eight. For now, we will focus on structuring the body of the sermon.

Asking and answering the questions determine structure:

- A. What do I want to say first? (introduction)
- B. What do I want to say next? (main point)
- C. What do I want to say next? (main point)
- D. What do I want to say next? (main point)
- E. What do I want to say last (conclusion)

Structuring the sermon is actually outlining the sermon, but in order to keep it simple, just think of structuring your sermon as ordering your points. You are arranging the major points you want to discuss in the most appropriate order so that your sermon is logical and easy to follow. Don't think of outlining instead think of arranging.

A benefit of a well-ordered sermon structure is that it is easier for you to remember as you preach without notes. A good sermon like a good story remembers itself and much of that is based on a well-arranged structure. The structure should have unity, order, and progress. Unity keeps the sermon focused. Order keeps the sermon clear and easy to follow. Progress makes sure the sermon is going someplace.

### *Hints on Effective Structuring*

#### A. Write Out Your Transition Statements

A transition statement alerts the listener that you are leaving one point and going on to another. On the written page, paragraph indentations alert the reader that the topic is being changed; however, in oral communication you must make notification through the use of transition statements. An example of a transition statement is: “Not only is God faithful but God is holy.” The sentence lets the hearer know that you are leaving a discussion of God’s faithfulness and going on to discuss God’s holiness.

#### B. Explain, Illustrate, and Apply Each Point

A good way to make sure that each point of your sermon is covered is to include some explanation, an illustration, and application under each major point. It is usually best to begin by explaining your point. Make sure that your audience understands clearly what you are proposing. After you have explained it is good to illustrate your point, to paint a picture with words so that people can “see” what you are saying. Finally, application is in order because our goal as preachers is to have people apply the Word of God to their lives. Example:

##### I. God is faithful (sermon point)

- A. When I say faithful what I mean is . . . (explanation)
- B. Story of a father who can always be trusted (illustration)
- C. Because God is faithful you can trust him:
  - 1. You can trust him with your family (application)
  - 2. You can trust him with your finances (application)
  - 3. You can trust him with your future (application)

*(Transition: God is faithful and God is holy)*

##### II. God is holy (sermon point)

## Stage 7—Dressing up Your Points

In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly. (Ecclesiastes 12:9-10)

After structuring your sermon, it is beneficial to fill out the structure with supporting material. Well-chosen support material will help with explanation, illustration, and application. It helps when speaking to turn ears into eyes and allow your audience to really “see” what is being discussed. Some of the ways to do this are:

### A. Definitions

Defining terms and concepts is a great way to help with explanation. In dealing with the Bible it is especially important to define concepts the way the Bible does and not according to secular standards. The Bible was written before Webster’s dictionary. Do not assume that your listeners know what you mean when you use a biblical term. Tell your audience what the author meant when he used the term.

### B. Illustrations

Good illustrations serve multiple duties because they can explain, prove, and or apply at the same time. Effective illustrations come from modern life and allow the listener to relate to what is being said. A worthwhile task is to make a hobby of collecting illustrations from everyday life. The best illustrations are those that both the speaker and listener can relate to. God’s truth is reflected in the world around us everyday; we need only open our eyes.

### C. Quotes

Quotations are a way of bringing in authority. If a noteworthy person makes a statement it can carry weight with the audience. Quotations can be gathered from books, magazine, and television, just to name a few sources..

### D. Restatement

Restatement is saying the same thing in different ways or with different words.

Restatement is an effective way to highlight or emphasize a point. It is particularly effective when stating the major points of your sermon as well as the main truth of the sermon. Restatement drives home a point like a hammer drives a nail. It attaches truth to the mind.

### E. Storytelling

A story is different from an illustration but a story can illustrate. Whether a story illustrates or not depends on how the story is being used. You can tell the story of Joseph in Genesis to illustrate the providence of God or you can tell of the story of Joseph simply to inform your audience of what happened to him. Everyone seems to enjoy a good story. It is amazing just how powerful the Bible stories can be if we just tell them with a minimum of interpretation. Is it any wonder that so much of the Bible is in narrative (story) form? Storytelling can be used to paint the background of a biblical passage. Story telling is a great way to make the Bible characters human. A story holds interest because of tension and plot.

### Stage 8—Introduce and Conclude Your Sermon

There are three types of preachers: those to whom you cannot listen; those to whom you can listen; and those to whom you must listen.<sup>18</sup>

For a preacher, the two-minute warning comes at the beginning of the game.<sup>19</sup>

Introductions and conclusions can make or break sermons. Without an effective introduction you may never gain a hearing from your audience. Without an effective conclusion you may leave audience members unmotivated to practice what they have been taught. They may not take up the majority of time in your sermon but the introduction and conclusion can decide whether you fail or succeed.

“A good introduction is to a sermon what an appetizer is to a gourmet meal. It whets the appetite for the rest of the meal. It creates a hunger for the food that follows.”<sup>20</sup>  
What are the elements of a good introduction?

#### *Introduction*

##### A. Elements of a Good Introduction

###### 1. Create interest and get attention focused on the sermon idea

A good introduction should grab the attention of your listeners. When people come to church their minds are not necessarily focused on the sermon. Some

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>19</sup> Michael J. Hostetler, *Introducing the Sermon: The Art of Compelling Beginnings*, The Craft of Preaching Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 11.

<sup>20</sup> Kent Edwards, "Why Should I Listen to You?," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 374.

are worried. Some are wondering where they will go for lunch. Some are chatting with their neighbor. Some are distracted. It is crucial that your introduction capture their attention. Your listeners have to decide, “this speaker is worth listening to.” You want to be a compelling speaker and that means having an introduction that forces people to want to hear what you have to say.

## 2. Raise a Need

Creating interest is important but it is not enough. One must raise a need so that the listener has a personal stake in listening to you after you’ve grabbed their attention. “Every person who listens to the sermon is asking the same question, ‘What does this have to do with me?’<sup>21</sup> People learn more and listen more attentively when they have a felt need.<sup>22</sup> The Bible has a lot to say about the needs of people and a good introduction helps in pointing this out.

## 3. Orientation

The introduction should orient the listener to the sermon. This happens in a variety of ways. Depending on the subject matter, the introduction may be a good place to fill in background information on a passage. Covering background material works well in the midst of a sermon series because the speaker is able to review past lessons and contextualize the upcoming sermon.

Your listeners should also be oriented to the body of the sermon by way of

<sup>21</sup> Hostetler, *Introducing the Sermon*, 19.

<sup>22</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 169.

preview. Telling your audience how the message will unfold and the purpose of the sermon gives them a road map for listening.

#### 4. Sermon Preview

A good introduction is able to preview the upcoming sermon and introduce the body of the sermon. Doing so allows the audience to set an expectation and to listen better. If you tell them you are going to share three truths about prayer, they now know what to listen for and approximately how long the sermon will be.

#### 5. Introduce the text

A good introduction directs the attention of the audience to the biblical text. They now know why they are turning to a passage if a need has been raised and a preview has been shared.

### B. Types of Introductions

#### 1. Engaging Story

This can be a story about almost anything but the key is that it grabs attention and makes the audience curious or interested in hearing more about that topic.

#### 2. Arresting Statistic

Statistics have a way of grabbing attention quickly.

#### 3. Current Event

There may be a current event on the minds of the people that can be used to introduce a biblical passage that relates to the topic. Jesus used a current event of his day when he taught on repentance (Luke 13:1-5).

#### 4. Humor

Humor can be effective but it must be handled carefully. It is easy for humor to direct attention to itself and not to the subject at hand.

#### 5. The Text Itself

This may be arresting if the nature of the text peaks interest.

#### 6. Provocative Question

Provocative questions make people think.

#### 7. Striking Quotation

Like an arresting statistic, a quotation can be an attention getter.

### *Conclusion*

The conclusion is burdened with two handicaps. The minister prepares it when he is the most tired, and the congregation hears it when they are most tired.<sup>23</sup>

#### A. Elements of a Good Conclusion

As important as the introduction is the conclusion. The conclusion is the last thing an audience hears and is for that reason the most memorable.

##### 1. It Concludes

It may seem unnecessary to say, but an effective conclusion concludes. When a sermon is concluded there should be a sense that the subject being addressed

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<sup>23</sup> George Edgar Sweazey, *Preaching the Good News* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 100.

has been covered sufficiently. The conclusion should complete the sermon.

Don't just stop but conclude.

## 2. It Reinforces the Main Truth

An effective conclusion leaves the audience with an understanding of the relevance of the subject addressed. Your listeners should be clear that the subject has relevance to their lives because it contains application. "Good conclusions should enable the listener to understand with even greater clarity what the sermon is all about. It should bring all of the information of the message into a burning focus."<sup>24</sup>

## 3. Emphasize Application

When a sermon is concluded the listeners should feel challenged by how the Word of God has called them to respond. It invites the audience to obedience. It is not enough to reach the mind an effective conclusion storms the will. It encourages hearers to respond.

## 4. It Ends on Purpose

A good conclusion ends on purpose. This is meant in two ways: First, a sermon must end intentionally rather than because the speaker has run out of things to say. Secondly, a sermon should conclude with a focus on the original purpose for which it was preached.

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<sup>24</sup> Kent Edwards, "Satisfying Conclusions," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 374.

## B. Types of Conclusions:

### 1. Illustration

An apt illustration can be powerful way to conclude a sermon. It can be an effective way of tying up loose ends and driving home your point.

### 2. Prayer

If not used too frequently a prayer may be the best way to conclude a sermon.

### 3. Question

An instigating question or even a series of questions is a good way to conclude a sermon. Questions demand a response and engage the listener.

### 4. Quotation

Sometimes a well-chosen quotation crystallizes the take home truth especially if it is pithy and insightful.

### 5. Song

Although it is easy to overdo, concluding a sermon with a song is sometimes fitting. This works particularly well if the song is well known to the audience and has a strong theological message.

### 6. Suggestions—Listeners need specific instruction on how to obey God practically. A sermon concluding with suggestions points out ways a listener can respond in their everyday world.

### 7. Summary

Although predictable, a summary of the major truths shared in the body of a

sermon may be a good way to conclude. Summary works well in sermons that are primarily teaching oriented.

#### 8. The Rest of the Story

Made famous by radio commentary Paul Harvey, this technique returns to a story brought up at the beginning of the sermon and concludes with the rest of the story.

#### 9. Visualization

Few techniques are as compelling as visualization. Visualization is painting a picture of what proper response looks like. People respond to clear pictures of a desired action. If the speaker is able to help his listeners visualize responding appropriately to the Word of God, he can win them over.

### C. Things not to Do in the Conclusion

1. Do not introduce new material.
2. Do not stop before you finish.
3. Do not leave application to the Holy Spirit alone.
4. Do not scold the listeners.
5. Do not let your conclusion fizzle out.
6. Do not drag out the conclusion.
7. Do not become predictable.

### Stage 10—Dress the Sermon in Black

While all cultures have preaching styles, what distinguishes African American preachers is their culturally specific interpretation of Scripture, their skillful use of emotional content, their understanding of the flow and timing of sermonic materials, and their energetic engagement of the congregation as tools for effectively communicating the gospel.

The African American style of preaching celebrates the good news that Christ is Lord and that salvation is available to all who believe in him. In order to better understand Black preaching in context, we will examine preaching etiquette, figures of speech, and celebration in Black Preaching.

#### *Pulpit Etiquette in Black Preaching*

In the Black church pulpit etiquette is important. It starts with respect for the senior pastor. If one is invited to preach, he or she is expected to thank and acknowledge the senior pastor of that church. A typical compliment would be something like,

Giving honor to God, your illustrative pastor, the other ministers on the rostrum, the officers and members of this great church, and to you my Father's children. I want to publicly thank your pastor for giving me this opportunity to share from his pulpit. Your pastor is a great preacher in his own right and I am blessed to be able to call him my friend. Let's give the Lord a hand of praise for Pastor Jones.

If one attempts to preach without acknowledging the senior pastor it will be difficult to gain congregational support, because the congregation will take the lack of acknowledgement as an affront to them as well as their pastor.

### *Common Figures of Speech in Black Preaching*

#### A. Alliteration

There is an appreciation for alliteration in Black preaching. Statements are made like, “Paul first discusses *doctrine* then *duty*” or “the *text* is *tailored* to *teach* us...” Alliteration in Black preaching adds style. Of course like anything else alliteration can be overdone. Galli warns about the misuse of alliteration, “Unless we handle alliteration subtly, without drawing attention to it, people will think it merely cute. We aim higher.”<sup>25</sup>

#### B. Apostrophe

An apostrophe is addressing someone not actually present: “I talked to David the other night and David told me, Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me’. I said thank you David for giving me hope.” The preacher uses the person not there as a witness bearer to the truth.

#### C. Common Tongue

The sermon must be delivered in the common tongue of the congregation. This is

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<sup>25</sup> Mark Galli and Craig Brian Larson, *Preaching That Connects: Using the Techniques of Journalists to Add Impact to Your Sermons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 50.

not exclusive to Black preaching but Black congregations have a common language. “Black preaching has been, and still is, effective and vital in our contemporary times because it has addressed black people in their own language with which they are most familiar and comfortable.”<sup>26</sup> This common tongue can only be learned by interaction among the community of the people of God.

#### D. Dialogue

Black preaching is a conversation between pulpit and pew. The preacher interprets God’s Word and the congregation responds through encouraging statements (“That’s right! Say that! Make it plain. You better preach! Hallelujah! Amen”), applause, or personal moments of praise. A dynamic and creative atmosphere develops that is not apparent in many other Christian communities. The listener becomes involved in the preaching process.

#### E. Eloquence

Eloquence is the ability to speak with force and persuasion. In Black preaching the ability to express oneself eloquently is highly prized. Dr. King expresses eloquence when he says, “The negro will only be free when he reaches down to the inner depths of his own being and signs with the pen and ink of assertive selfhood his own emancipation proclamation.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Warren H. Stewart, *Interpreting God’s Word in Black Preaching* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1984), 54.

<sup>27</sup> Martin Luther King, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 40.

#### F. Experiential Preaching

The Black preacher must be able to stir identification, emotion and interest through sense appeal. The senses of the listener are appealed to through the skillful use of language. The congregation is able to see, feel, taste, and hear what is being preached. Watch Dr. Jerry Black on the DVD included in this handbook.

#### G. Gestures

Black preaching typically involves movement of the whole body. From slavery times, movement of the body was a limited way to express freedom. African American preachers deliver sermons with *body* and soul. In Black preaching, body movement, facial expressions, hands and arms etc., serve to project meaning in the sermon. Very rarely will a Black preacher stand motionless behind the pulpit while preaching.

#### H. Imagination

The best of Black preaching is highly imaginative. Even today it is not unusual to hear the preacher say, “In my sanctified imagination I can see...” This becomes a way to paint a picture of what the biblical text is portraying. During these times freedom is granted to bring some aspects of the text up to today; God can hold a “business meeting” with Moses on the mountain, Jesus can feed the 5,000 with a “two-piece dinner from Red Lobster”, the prodigal son can be outfitted with a new suit from Pierre Cardin, and Martha can be in the kitchen frying chicken, cooking greens, and making a peach cobbler for dessert.

### I. Repetition

Repetition is the repeating of a word or phrase used to drive home a point. One of the most effective characteristics of Black preaching is the use of repetition. This was exemplified in Dr. Martin Luther King's famous I have a Dream speech. The repeated phrase of "I have a dream . . ." resonates throughout the speech. Repetition allows for impact and memorization through saturation.

### J. Rhythm

"If the preacher is to be heard and felt by the African American congregation, there must be a rhythmic delivery of the sermon. In Black preaching the sermon is both prose and poem"<sup>28</sup> One can easily detect the rhythm in the sermons of Dr. Martin Luther King and most other Black preachers. However, younger preachers seem more conversational than rhythmic. This is not necessarily bad. The best preachers are flexible enough to adjust their style to fit their audience.

### K. Runs

A run is a recited list, a roll call, citations, spoken in such a way that the listener is swept up not only in what is being said but the rapid-fire way in which it is being said. A run is a powerful way to conclude a sermon:

Jesus is:

Adam's redeemer,  
Eden's tree of life,  
Moses' rod,

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<sup>28</sup> James H. Harris, *The Word Made Plain: The Power and Promise of Preaching* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 82.

Joshua's courage,  
 Samson's strength,  
 Samuel's Ebenezer  
 Elijah's fire,  
 David's music,  
 Solomon's wisdom  
 Isaiah's prince of peace  
 Jeremiah's balm in Gilead  
 My doctor when I'm sick,  
 My lawyer when I get in trouble,  
 My all in all

#### L. Simile

A simile is a comparison in which one thing is compared to another using the words “like or as”: The Bible uses simile, “All men are *like* grass” (1 Peter 1:24).

A Black sermon example is, “Solomon wore a golden crown that was studded with diamonds that sparkled *like* dew drops when kissed by the bright rays of a rising sun.”

#### M. Storytelling

Black preaching has long valued storytelling. As a matter of fact one way to ask if a person has preaching ability is to say, “Can he tell the story?” To be able to tell the story is to be able to bring a story to life as an eyewitness. Black preachers use imagination and creativity to bring stories to life. Communication specialists call storytelling inductive preaching, and Black preachers have practiced this form of preaching since slavery times.

We have examined some of the characteristics in language and delivery of Black preaching. None of these characteristics are exclusively found in Black preaching but together many of them are found in Black preaching. We will now turn our attention to

what is perhaps most identified with Black preaching and that is celebration in the sermon.

### *Celebration*

The most notable characteristic of Black preaching is the climax known as celebration. “Here celebration means joyful, ecstatic, enthusiastic, and glorious expressions in mass African American worship and preaching.”<sup>29</sup> Like Miriam and the Israelites at the Red Sea, and like David before the ark, African-Americans celebrate God with their whole being. Celebration even transcends educational and social backgrounds. Professionals and educated people celebrate in Black churches as well as the laborers and the uneducated.

Celebration usually comes at the end of the sermon like a crescendo. The preacher himself can initiate celebration that infects his congregation. Sometimes celebration is marked by a switch in cadence or style by the preacher somewhere near the end of the sermon. According to Frank Thomas, “[T]he nature and purpose of African American preaching is to help people experience the assurance of grace that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Whenever the assurance of grace is experienced . . . the natural response is celebration and praise to God.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Olin P. Moid, *The Sacred Art: Preaching and Theology in the African American Tradition* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1995), 101.

<sup>30</sup> Frank A. Thomas, *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching* (Cleveland, OH: United Church Press, 1997), 19.

Celebration is not rehearsed emotionalism but a natural response of gratitude when God's goodness is experienced through his Word. Blacks find support for celebration in the Bible as Israel would celebrate in song and dance after God had done great things for them. Celebration is an integral, authentic, and wholesome aspect of worship in the Black church.

The central event that inspires celebration in a Black sermon is the taking of a trip to Calvary. The preacher will conclude his sermon with a retelling of what happened to Jesus and how he was arrested in Gethsemane, beat at Gabbatha, hung on Golgotha, how they put nails in his hands, and nails in his feet, and a crown of thorns on his head. The preacher talks about how they pierced him in the side and how he died on Friday and they put him in a borrowed tomb. Jesus stayed there all night Friday, all day Saturday, all night Saturday night, but early Sunday morning he got up with all power in his hands! This calls for celebration.

There is a manner of celebration used by the Black preacher known as whooping. Whooping is the singsong manner of closing a sermon. It has its roots in West Africa. Some consider whooping primitive and undignified but it is still used effectively in many Black churches. Preachers are classified as either whoopers or non-whoopers.

The practice of whooping is not as wide spread as it used to be and is more prevalent in the South and in rural churches. Whooping seems to be accepted less in higher educated congregations. A good whooper can usher in celebration as he concludes his sermon in a tonal voice still telling the story of Jesus. The truth of the sermon must be reinforced and whooping facilitates driving home the sermon idea.

We have briefly discussed Black pulpit etiquette, figures of speech, and celebration. I have purposely left this discussion for last because our goal as preachers should first work on the content of what we preach before we focus on the style in which we preach it.

#### Stage 10—Deliver the Sermon

##### A. Internalize the Sermon

This refers to allowing the sermon to seep down into one's whole being. You not only know the words of the sermon but you feel it as well. This is not the same as memorizing the sermon for to internalize is to allow the sermon to saturate into your spirit. It has been said that it is not enough for the preacher to have his sermon, but his sermon must also have him. A biblical picture of internalization is the prophet Ezekiel eating the scroll given to him by Lord and then being asked to prophesy to God's people (Ezekiel 3:10-11).

##### B. Be Familiar with the Audience

According to Haddon Robinson, Good speakers ask, "What is the subject?" Great speakers ask, "Who is the audience?" In preaching to a Black congregation it is important to assess your audience before you preach. One can see how much they dialog and how celebrative they are during the singing and worship. Black congregations express themselves in a wide range of ways. Some congregations expect and appreciate whooping while others look down on it. As in any public speaking get to know your audience in order to be effective.

### C. Trust the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit must be allowed to possess the preacher if he is to preach with freedom and the anointing. Many people see the Holy Spirit as the mysterious member of the trinity. But, effective Black preaching requires a freedom and a power that only the Holy Spirit can supply. Many of the best points of a sermon are not pre-planned but happen in the midst of the preaching event through inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If you want to be make an impact then trust the Holy Spirit.

### D. Let yourself Go

Black preaching is uninhibited preaching. The congregation appreciates a preacher who feels free enough to allow God to use him in whatever way God chooses. In Black preaching the words of an old hymn are appropriate, “Have Thine own way Lord! Have Thine own way! Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.”<sup>31</sup> The preacher who can yield himself to the lord in the act of preaching is the preacher who receives a response from the Black church.

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<sup>31</sup> Don Hustad and George C. Stebbins, *Have Thine Own Way, Lord: (Satb Choir, Accompanied)* (Carol Stream, IL: Hope, 1969).

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## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING EXPERIENCE

This purpose of the expository preaching seminar was to teach African American pastors without formal education how to preach biblically, how to prepare and deliver expository sermons in the African-American tradition. The author of this paper taught this material on two occasions in different parts of the country. The first occasion was an eight-hour seminar as part of the United Church of Christ Church Development Conference at New Iberia, Louisiana in September 2003. The second teaching opportunity was a nine-week class to the associate ministers at the Friendly Friendship Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California in 2005.

#### **The One-Day Teaching Experience**

The one day seminar provided insufficient time to build confidence in the preachers. The class was composed of 18 preachers from mostly rural churches in Louisiana. The group ranged in age from 25- 60 with an average of seven years of preaching experience. Ethnically the group was African-American with the exception of one Caucasian, the conference minister.

The initial goal was to provide an overview and suggest some resources for ongoing study. The students were eager and excited to learn about expository preaching. This excitement stimulated the students to inundate the seminar leader with questions at

every stage of instruction. Time seemed to evaporate in fruitful discussions that sometimes exceeded the bounds of the subject matter being discussed.

At the end of the seminar the students were presented with three questions and asked to answer on notebook paper. The questions asked were:

1. What was your overall opinion of the seminar?
2. What helped you most/least and why?
3. What suggestions do you have to improve this seminar?

### **The Nine-Week Teaching Experience**

Associate ministers at the Friendly Friendship Missionary Baptist Church (FFMBC) were presented essentially the same material but over a longer period of time. None of the preachers had any formal training in ministry and ranged in age from 43-68. All of the ministers were African-American and had at least five years of experience as preachers.

The nine-week class was less rushed than the one-day seminar, but other challenges developed. The class focused on a chapter a week for two hours from the expository preaching handbook. Each week the author challenged the associate ministers to observe the author in the pulpit for demonstration of principles taught in class. The goal each week was to emphasize the subject discussed the week prior in class. Rather than have the participants complete a written evaluation, the author sat with them as a group at the seminar's end and discussed their impressions.

### **The Author's Evaluation of the Teaching Experiences**

It has been said that teachers benefit more than students, and this was how I felt. My knowledge of preaching increased. Teaching was a rewarding and enjoyable experience. However, instructing the class was more demanding than I anticipated because communicating clearly is a constant challenge. I also learned about teaching and would have benefited from talking with a preaching professor to get a realistic picture of what to expect from students.

Haddon Robinson's oft said admonition, "Less is more" carries more impact in the wake of the author's teaching experience for this project . Learning to preach well is difficult and teaching others to preach is even more difficult. I have a new respect for teachers of preaching because it involves so much more than sharing techniques. Teachers must share important principles while allowing latitude for persons to be themselves. Learning to preach takes time.

### **Recommendations**

Before students take this class, they must have a basic understanding of Bible study. Over and over again while practicing exercises for this class, poor Bible study skills stood in the way of students preparing solid expository sermons. An apt analogy might be: "It is like sharing a recipe with someone who does not know how to select the ingredients at the store." No matter how good the recipe, the dish will be ruined because of poor ingredients. The author spent more time on proper exegesis than on proper homiletics because there was such a vital need.

Beyond the teacher and materials, students have to be committed to expending the effort required to learn. In the one-day class, the students were highly motivated throughout the day but were unable because of time restraints to really grasp the material. The class became a sort of expository preaching pep rally. All students praised the class highly and said they wished they had more time to spend with the instructor working on the method. One thing was clear, expository preaching is not for the lazy.

In the nine-week class, the students started out motivated but their commitment quickly diminished. Attendance at later class sessions was sporadic. The problem was an egotistical belief that they “already knew how to preach.” When given the opportunity to preach at the church and practice what they had learned, each of them reverted to old familiar ways of preaching. Preachers must be committed to hard work if they ever want to be solid expositors of the Word.

My students constantly asked for examples of what I was teaching and I found it difficult to think of examples on the spot. Initially, I recommended that they go and hear certain preachers in Los Angeles to observe what they had been taught. Afterwards, I came up with the idea of composing a DVD of some top African-American preachers with varying styles and gifts. I made the DVD (see appendix) and it has proven to be an effective teaching tool.

My purpose in earning the Doctor of Ministry degree at Gordon-Conwell was to prepare myself for an active role in raising the homiletic level of preaching in the African-American preaching community. This goal remains and will require hard work, faith, and God’s grace, and commitment to making a difference.

## APPENDIX

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN SERMONS (INCLUDES DVD)

This appendix accompanies the Black-preaching handbook as a demonstration of variety in expository preaching within the African-American tradition. As a visual and audio example, the DVD captures the dynamics and holistic impact of the Black preaching experience. The DVD contains five different sermons: (1) a highly exegetical sermon, (2) a sermon highlighting call and response, (3) a storytelling sermon, (4) a topical expository sermon, and (5) a traditional sermon ending in a whoop.

The preachers in this appendix are all well known within the African-American community as speakers who exemplify the best in Black preaching. The sermons selected are typical of the style of each preacher.

#### Speakers and Sermons

Dr. Jerry D. Black is the Pastor of Beulah Missionary Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia and has been preaching since age 21. Dr. Black holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in history. Because of his competence in preaching and leadership, he is called "Doc." He is affectionately known as the "Arkansas Tornado" because of his preaching style.

Dr. Black is a versatile preacher known especially for his storytelling ability in preaching. As research has shown, much of Black preaching involves narrative or storytelling preaching. Black preachers are judged on whether or not they can “tell the story.” Dr. Black has the ability to bring the Bible to life with details that stimulate the senses and paint a picture of the text.

In a sermon entitled, “A Trip to Job’s House,” Dr. Black preaches the story of Job by assuming the position of a spiritual tour guide. The sermon is based on the book of Job and the big idea that it pays to trust God in the midst of crisis. Dr. Black encourages members of the congregation to use their spiritual imaginations in visualizing biblical events.

Dr. Tony Evans is co-founder and serves as the Senior Pastor of the 7,500 member Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship (OCBF) in Dallas, Texas. Dr Evans was the first African-American to receive a doctoral degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas. In July 1985, Dr. Evans established Alternative Community Development Services, Inc. d.b.a. Project Turn•*Around* to serve as the social outreach arm of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, offering urban youth and families an array of services that address their social, health, economic, and education needs.

Evans is also founder and president of The Urban Alternative, a national organization that seeks to bring about spiritual and family renewal in urban America through the church. The Urban Alternative radio broadcast, “*The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans*,” can be heard on over 600 stations daily throughout the U.S. and in over 40

countries worldwide, as well as being seen on television on several major networks and in 100 countries around the world. He is a speaker on the Promise Keepers' platform as well as at crusades and Bible conferences.

Tony Evans considers himself an evangelical, and with his theological training, he marries the best of biblical exposition with solid teaching and African-American fervor. In a sermon entitled "The Husband's Role in the Home," based on Ephesians 5:25-33, Dr. Evans applies the big idea that "husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church."

Darrell L. Gilyard Sr. is the Pastor of Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church in downtown Jacksonville, Florida. In the past fourteen years under the leadership of Pastor Gilyard, Shiloh has grown from 200 to 9,000 members.

Pastor Gilyard is a straightforward expositor of the Bible. Gilyard uses a touch of humor and is a good illustrator of truth. Darrell Gilyard strives to present in an almost colorless way without the rhythmic or tonal qualities expected by many black churches. Some would classify Gilyard as a black preacher who "sounds" white.

In a sermon entitled "The Fire of the Word," Pastor Gilyard preaches from Paul's letter to his son in the ministry, Timothy. The sermon is based Paul's second letter to Timothy instructing the young man on the importance of the Word of God. Pastor Gilyard's big idea is the Word of God is sufficient for living the Christian life.

Dr. Ralph D. West is the Pastor and founder of Brookhollow Baptist Church, also known as The Church Without Walls, in Houston, Texas. Dr. West holds a Bachelor's

degree from Bishop College, a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Beeson Divinity School. Dr. West has also studied at Cambridge and Oxford universities.

Dr. West is a gifted preacher who has a variety of preaching gifts at his disposal. He covers the range from straight expository teaching, to storytelling, to first person narrative sermons, to whooping.

In a sermon entitled “You Have Made a Believer of Me,” Dr. West preaches the account of Thomas and his unbelief in the resurrection. West’s big idea is: “The biblical record is enough to convince one of the identity of Jesus Christ and the validity of his claims.”

Robert A. Williams Jr. is the pastor of McCoy Memorial Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California and holds a Ph. D. from the California Graduate School of Theology in Glendale, California. Dr. Williams is also President of WHW Ministries, a ministry that teaches pastors and preachers expository preaching techniques and hosts an annual conference on expository preaching and teaching.

Dr. Williams is known a “whooper,” one who concludes his sermons with a tonal celebration. Whooping has been a practice within the African-American preaching tradition since slavery times and is thought to have originated in West Africa. R. A. Williams is unique for his scholarly handling of the Scripture text and fluency in biblical languages.

The sermon he preaches is entitled “21 Days to a Mind Transformation” and is based on an exposition of Romans 12:1-2. Williams’ big idea is: “You can embrace the trials of life knowing that God is at work transforming you into his image.”

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## VITA

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LaMonte attended Arizona State University where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance (1982). After working in the corporate world for several years, he earned a Master of Divinity degree from Azusa Pacific Graduate School of Theology in Azusa, California (2000). LaMonte subsequently earned a Master of Arts degree in Bible Exposition from Talbot Seminary in La Mirada, California (2001). He is currently completing the “Preacher and the Message” track at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, under the direction of Dr. Haddon W. Robinson. He enrolled in the Gordon-Conwell Doctor of Ministry program in 2002 and his expected graduation date is January, 2008.

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